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Carving a Life: The Political Economy of Woodcarver Livelihoods in Cabo Delgado, Northern Mozambique

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April 2012

Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis looks at how the livelihood trajectories of the Makonde woodcarvers currently living and working in Cabo Delgado, northern Mozambique can be conceptualised and interpreted. In particular, it examines the commodification of Makonde woodcarving which began during colonialism and has accelerated due to the growth of tourism and other export markets in Cabo Delgado since Independence. While these markets have offered opportunities for a few carvers, most appear to have faced economic marginalisation and growing poverty. The range of livelihood trajectories the carvers have faced is, however, only partially revealed using conventional frameworks such as Global Value Chain analysis and Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches. Political economy, in contrast, offers both a more relevant set of questions to ask and the means of investigating these.

Underpinning this thesis is a longitudinal study encompassing three periods of fieldwork in northern Mozambique between 2005 and 2010 which together generated a unique and rich set of data. The geographic foci of the field research, Pemba and Mueda district, are both recognised centres of carving activity. Following initial enumeration, field research (in 2005) incorporated a quantitative survey of carver households and group discussions conducted with carving associations; a follow-up visit in 2010 involved the collection of life stories from a selected sub-set of carvers. These life stories, together with the longitudinal nature of the fieldwork itself, allowed me to explore longer-term changes in carver lives and carver social networks.

It is clear that despite their apparent homogeneity, the Makonde woodcarvers of Cabo Delgado, Mozambique have faced a variety of livelihood trajectories as artists and artisans. Most, however, find themselves embedded within historically-contingent networks of survival. This questions the hope (or expectation) that livelihood diversification, within the context of the growing commodification of African arts and crafts, can meaningfully contribute to poverty reduction or to accumulation.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AGF	Aga Khan Foundation
ASL	African Safari Lodge
BDCC	Buyer-Driven Commodity Chains
CAP	Cultural Activities Project
CATIE	Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza
CBN	Cost of Basic Needs
CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CD	Cabo Delgado
CDE	Centre for Development and Environment
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
COPLA	Comercio y Pobreza en Latinoamérica
CRU	Commodities Research Unit
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height
DFID	UK Department of International Development
DPEC	Provincial Department of Education and Culture
EDI	Entrepreneur Development Initiative
FA	Factor Analysis
FIAS	Foreign Investment Advisory Service
FPLM	Popular Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GCC	Global Commodity Chain
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoM	Government of Mozambique
GVC	Global Value Chain
HDI	Human Development Index
IAF	Inquerito Aos Agregados Familiares
ICRT	International Centre for Responsible Tourism
IESE	Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFTRAB	Inquerito Integrado a Força de Trabalho
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
IMF	International Monetary Fund
M4P	Making Markets Work for the Poor
MANU	Mozambique African National Union

MCA	Multiple Correspondence Analysis
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDI	Multidimensional Poverty Index'
MITUR	Ministry of Tourism, Mozambique
MPD	Ministry of Planning and Development, Mozambique
MZM	Currency of Mozambique
NER	Net Enrolment Rates
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NMTP	Northern Mozambique Tourism Project
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
NTPIS	National Tourism Policy and Implementation Strategy
NPA	National Poverty Assessment
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PARPA	Action Plan to Reduce Absolute Poverty
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PDCC	Producer-Driven Commodity Chains
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessments
PPI	Pro-Poor Income
PPT	Pro-Poor Tourism
PRE	Economic Rehabilitation Programme
PRSPs	World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SL	Sustainable livelihoods
SLHs	Simple License Holders
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SMFE	Small and Medium Forest Enterprises
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers
Sops	System of Provision
TIA	Trabalho de Inquérito Agrícola
TSA	Tourism Satellite Accounting
UACAD	Union of Craft Associations in Cabo Delgado
UCM	Catholic University of Mozambique
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNWTO	United Nations World Trade Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCA	Value Chain Analysis
WST	World Systems Theory
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Glossary

<i>Aldeamentos</i> (Port.)	Large protected villages
<i>Autoridades Gentilicas</i> (Port.)	Native authorities
<i>Binadamu</i> (Swahili)	Human being. Name of realistic figurative carvings of human figures or themes.
<i>Capitão-mor</i> (Port.)	Native intermediate-level authority
<i>Chibalo</i> (Moz.)	Colonial-era term for forced labour
<i>Dimongo</i> (Shimakonde)	Strength, vigour and energy of people working together. Alternative for Ujamaa
<i>Humu</i> (Shimakonde)	Clan leader; arbitrator of disputes in a Makonde matrilineage.
<i>Ingoma</i> (Shimakonde)	Cultural 'rite of passage' (females)
<i>Likola</i> (Shimakonde)	Matrilineage or clan
<i>Likonde</i> (Shimakonde)	Fertile Land
<i>Likumbi</i> (Shimakonde)	Cultural 'rite of passage' (males)
<i>Lipiko</i> (Shimakonde)	Singular of mapiko.
<i>Makonde</i>	'People in search of fertile land (<i>likonde</i>)
<i>Mapiko</i> (Shimakonde)	Helmet mask made of light wood (eg njala); also used to refer to the masked dance performed at male initiation rites.
<i>Mashetani</i> (Shimakonde)	Plural of Shetani
<i>Machamba</i> (Port.)	Cultivated field (derived from the swahili word <i>shamba</i>)
<i>Metical</i> (Moz.)	Unit of currency in post-Independence Mozambique
<i>Miombo</i> (Swahili)	Brachystegia forest land
<i>Mpingo</i> (Shimakonde)	African Ebony or Blackwood (Lat. <i>dalbergia melanoxylon</i>)
<i>Nang'olo</i> (Shimakonde)	Village elder or settlement chief
<i>Ndona</i>	Ebony
<i>Njala</i>	Lightweight wood
<i>Nkamangu</i>	Masquerade for female initiates
<i>Nnandenga</i> (Shimakonde)	Term for <i>shetani</i> , also known in Kiswahili as <i>jini</i> (from the Arabic <i>djinn</i>)
<i>Pau preto</i> (Port.)	Portuguese for <i>mpingo</i> , African blackwood or ebony.
<i>Shetani</i> (Shimakonde)	A spirit of the Makonde cosmogony that can be either good or bad.
<i>Shitengamato</i>	Masks of clay used for <i>Nkamangu</i>

<i>Ujamaa</i> (Swahili)	Family-hood or 'togetherness'; name of a composite carving type typically composed of many interlocking human figures.
<i>Ukodi</i> (Shimakonde)	Annual community charge
<i>Uwavi</i> (Shimakonde)	Sorcery
<i>Vamakonde</i>	Plural of Makonde
<i>Vinyago</i> (Swahili)	Collective term for African blackwood carvings (sing. <i>kinyago</i>)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The research goal

Just across from Pemba International Airport, in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, carvers from the Bela Baia Cooperative sit sculpting in the shade, oblivious to the passing traffic on the four-lane tarmac road adjacent to their workplace. A small sign in the middle of the road publicises their existence to potential buyers, or interested passers-by. Several large trunks of African blackwood ('mpingo') lie by the covered working area, waiting to be cut to size, then to be transformed over many days of hard work (and skill and inspiration) into intricate carved figures or artefacts ready for sale. But, as the carvers will tell you, 'there are few clients' who come to buy, so these carvings may sit with many others for weeks or months in the Cooperative's packed showroom. Throughout Cabo Delgado, the northernmost province of Mozambique, there are many such scenes as this. Woodcarvers working alone or in small semi-formal groups— almost all of whom are of Makonde ethnicity – produce sculptures of astoundingly high quality from African blackwood or *mpingo*, often using basic tools they have themselves made. They can be found in both rural and urban settings, most using carving as a supplementary, but highly insecure, economic activity. Although they produce these carvings – in a range of genres and styles - expressly for the 'market', most in practice derive very small and irregular returns from their sale, often struggling to make a living. They continue to cling on to the Makonde woodcarving 'tradition' – built around kinship-based transmission of carving skills from one generation to the next - driven to carve (it appears) not simply from economic imperative and the struggle to escape from poverty, but also as part of a deeply-felt cultural commitment, or what several of the carvers describe as 'the legacy of the ancients'.

Despite their apparent homogeneity (in terms of gender, ethnicity and geographical origin) the Makonde carvers of Cabo Delgado, Mozambique have faced very different livelihood 'trajectories'; most, however, now find themselves embedded in historically-contingent 'networks of survival', rather than 'networks of accumulation' (Meagher, 2010). This appears to call into question the hope (or expectation) that livelihood

diversification countenanced on the production of art or craft which is becoming increasingly commodified can contribute in any meaningful way to poverty reduction, let alone accumulation. Indeed, it is clear that the woodcarvers (both individually and collectively), in a process driven by capitalist development, have now been inexorably drawn into a global woodcarving 'chain' governed by more powerful 'actors' (retailers, traders and tourists) and within which they lack any meaningful agency to counter the tendency towards commodification. This suggests that in order explain the 'livelihoods' of contemporary carvers and the 'trajectories' these have followed, it is necessary to move beyond (and many respects discard) conventional frameworks such as Global Value Chain (GVC) analysis and Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches (SLA). Political economy, in contrast, offers both a more relevant set of questions to ask and the means of investigating these.

In this study I emphasise the historical roots and evolution of Makonde woodcarving, its economic transformation as both livelihood activity and as a means of resistance to colonialism and, finally, its cultural 're-invention' as a result of the widespread migration of Makonde carvers from Cabo Delgado to Tanzania over the last century. Although, as I make clear in Chapter 2, there is a fairly extensive body of literature on art and craft production and trade in Africa, most of it is dated and has emanated from anthropological and art history traditions, rather than that of political economy; the published work specifically available on Makonde sculpture has had similar foci. There has also been a relative neglect of art and craft production (including woodcarving) in East and Southern Africa, when compared to that of West Africa (Arero, 2005). In addition, although woodcarving is an important element in rural and urban livelihoods in many parts of Africa, until recently little had been written about its cultural or economic contribution in any systematic way. This study goes some way towards countering this omission.

1.2 The research setting

As I have already intimated, this thesis has at its core a detailed empirical case study of contemporary Makonde woodcarvers living and working on the Mueda plateau (their 'traditional' homeland), and in and around the provincial capital Pemba, in Cabo Delgado. This province still contains the main concentration of Makonde in Mozambique, although increasing numbers have moved to Maputo and other smaller urban centres since the 1980s. Another traditional centre of Makonde settlement (and carving activity) has been (and remains) the Newala plateau and its surrounding area, north of the Rovuma River in south-eastern Tanzania. The number of Makonde in Tanzania was swelled by successive waves of migration from Cabo Delgado between the 1920s and 1990s and a substantial number (including many involved in woodcarving) are now found in Dar es Salaam. For most observers (and in most academic research), 'modern' Makonde woodcarving has tended to be associated with the large woodcarving 'industry' that has grown up around Mwenge Craft Village in Dar es Salaam. The present research offers both a counterweight to these existing studies and, because of its particular geographical and historical focus on northern Mozambique, provides the opportunity for extending (and testing) their insights.

The precise origins of the people who eventually coalesced as the Makonde ethnic group are disputed, but they are known to have been present on the Mueda plateau, in the centre of what is now Cabo Delgado province, from as early as the late eighteenth century onwards (see Chapter 4). However, the emergence of the Makonde as a distinct ethnic group on the plateau over the following century or so was not the result of their isolation, but followed from an openness which saw the coming together of people of diverse origin as a result of migration and the slave trade. From early on, therefore, the entrenched ethnicity (and way of life) of the Makonde was formed and solidified through cultural (and economic) encounters with historically constructed others (West, 2005). In terms of contemporary livelihoods the most significant and far-reaching 'encounter' was the invasion of the Mueda plateau by the Portuguese in 1917; indeed, the invaders' use of the collective term 'Makonde' for plateau residents served to

cement the latter's cultural distinctiveness and their emergence as a defined ethnic group.

Sculpting has deep roots in African culture and certainly pre-dates colonial contact (and the systematic removal of artefacts following European incursions); in some cases (like that of Nok terracotta sculpture from West Africa) it has a history dating back more than 2000 years (Willett, 2002). Contemporary African sculpting now demonstrates a wide diversity of forms and level of sophistication and a broad geographical spread, although it remains more heavily concentrated in the dense forests of West and Central Africa, than in East Africa. Most writers trace the beginnings of 'traditional' Makonde woodcarving, as that of woodcarving in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa more generally, to the sculpting of wooden objects for ritual or functional use. Ritual items were largely of two forms, small figurines (representing the owner's matrilineal kinship group) believed to have protective qualities and the *mapiko* masks used in male initiation ceremonies. Functional products would have included wooden boxes, some of which were traded with coastal merchants from as early as the late eighteenth century. The Mozambican Makonde from the Mueda plateau were considered to have one of the finest woodcarving traditions in Eastern Africa (Kingdon, 2005a), based on locally-available raw materials. Nevertheless, while woodcarving played an important social and cultural role, it did not initially constitute an economic activity or source of livelihood to replace or supplement agriculture or hunting. In contrast to some West African communities (Willett, 2002), this relative neglect of woodcarving tended to inhibit the emergence of specialist artists or crafters in pre-colonial Makonde society.

As I explain in Chapter 2, it was only subsequent to colonial occupation of the Mueda plateau, from the mid-1920s, that early forms of patronage by missionaries and colonial officers prompted the production of new forms of carving and began to transform the place of carving (and individual carvers) in Makonde society. Later, the patronage of FRELIMO during the liberation struggle in the 1960s and 1970s brought further transformation. FRELIMO's championing of Makonde sculpture as 'revolutionary art' and its encouragement of carver cooperatives producing for export, embedded new

carving styles and forms of organisational structure. Finally, the relative neglect (or at least the perceived neglect) of Makonde carving by the Mozambican state in the post-Independence period emerged as a frequent theme in my discussions with carvers (see Chapter 7). Further contextual discussion is provided in Chapter 4, where I describe the broader social history of Cabo Delgado, emphasising issues of colonial resistance, migration, and economic and social transformation.

1.3 Research questions

The main object of the analysis is to examine the origins, trajectories, opportunities and constraints faced by the Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado. More specifically, the research questions fall into three key areas:

(i) What evidence is there of stratification and differentiation within carving groups and between individual carvers?

- What are the economic, social and cultural characteristics of individuals who rely wholly or partly on woodcarving as an income-earning or survival activity?
- How stratified are carver households (both within and between carving groups)?
- Are carvers different from their neighbours?

(ii) How can the livelihood trajectories of contemporary Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado be conceptualised?

- How do the carvers themselves describe their livelihoods?
- What has been the role of history, cultural ‘tradition’, colonialism and post-Independence policies in shaping individual livelihoods and carver social networks?
- What evidence is there of livelihood ‘diversification’ (ie to what extent do carvers pursue different forms of income generation)?
- In terms of survival or accumulation do the carvers draw on the resources of carver social networks (cooperatives or associations)?
- What are the barriers to entry into carving? How far do these relate to skills acquisition, social networks, contingent events etc?

(iii) What evidence is there of the growing commodification of Makonde sculpture and what has been the impact of the development of artisanal markets on the livelihood opportunities of the woodcarvers?

- How has the market for woodcarvings evolved as a ‘system of provision’ in terms of both ‘vertical’ (market links and intermediaries) and ‘horizontal’ dimensions (carver social networks and ‘place’)?
- How are woodcarvings, as ‘cultural products’, valued?
- What evidence is there of changes in woodcarving styles and production techniques in response to the growth in tourism and broader market developments?
- What approaches have the Makonde woodcarvers adopted to counter the tendency towards commodification and what scope is there for ‘upgrading’?

1.4 Thesis outline

1.4.1 Reviewing the literature

In addressing the research questions I begin the thesis with two chapters reviewing the relevant theoretical and empirical literature. The literature review was originally conceived of as a single chapter, but the wide-ranging nature of the issues under investigation soon made it apparent that as such it would quickly become too broad and unwieldy. While with hindsight this was probably inevitable, it proved to be opportune in terms of reconfiguring my approach to both the literature and to the framing of the empirical chapters to make them more integrated as well as tractable.

In line with the research approach, the literature review I present (in Chapters 2 and 3) is designed to cover a number of areas, but has at its core an attempt to critically explore the broad analytical frameworks surrounding sustainable livelihoods (SL) and global value chain (GVC) approaches, both of which might be regarded as particularly relevant to questions of woodcarving and carver livelihood trajectories. Although both have major theoretical shortcomings, these frameworks nevertheless provided a useful way of scaffolding my empirical study in terms of data gathering and interpretation (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3, below).

The first part of the literature review (Chapter 2) looks in particular at processes of commodification of Makonde sculpture and the place of carvers within an international woodcarving 'chain' or 'system of provision' (Fine, 2002) under capitalism. The aim is two-fold: firstly, to explore the political economy of African arts and crafts, with a particular emphasis on the historical evolution of Makonde woodcarving and the conditions within which the distinctive carver social networks emerged; and, secondly, to identify the scope and usefulness of the Global Value Chain (GVC) approach as a theoretical framework, particularly as it pertains to an understanding of the contemporary woodcarving 'chain', wrapped as it is in historical, political and economic contingency. The 'systems of provision' (sops) approach places the unique vertical logic of the Makonde woodcarving 'chain' at the centre of the analysis and allows us to explore ideas of cultural value and the social relations (or the 'horizontal' conditions) in which commodity production and exchange are embedded. The concern in the sops approach is with the systemic processes that surround and underpin the particular production, distribution and consumption conditions of a given commodity (here Makonde woodcarving) and its historical contingency.

The second part of the literature review (in Chapter 3) focuses on an exploration of the importance of natural resources for the livelihoods of the poor, looking specifically at forests and woodlands (and non-timber forest products), and providing links to the relevant literature on woodcarving and handicrafts. This leads into a review of how sustainable livelihoods approaches moved into the policy arena in the form of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), their place in wider development discourse and the insights they might provide into understanding the dimensions and dynamic nature of contemporary poverty. A particular concern is with examining how far the SLF is able to incorporate dynamic changes in livelihoods and to critically examine its focus on individual agency and the strategic use of multiple 'assets' as a way of framing poor peoples' livelihoods. Given that individual carver livelihoods are invariably embedded within carving groups (associations or cooperatives), some more successful than others, a closer examination of the varied forms and nature of 'social networks' (Meagher, 2005; 2010), largely absent from the SLF, seems essential.

1.4.2 Methodology: Field research

Underpinning this thesis is a longitudinal study encompassing three periods of fieldwork in northern Mozambique between 2005 and 2010, supplemented by on-going links with locally-based key informants and an additional short data-gathering visit to Maputo (in April 2008), which together generated a unique and rich set of data. The pattern and timing of the fieldwork visits was partly determined by issues of logistics and resources, but also with the requirement to fit these visits around employment demands. Field research focused mainly on carvers in Pemba city (the provincial capital of Cabo Delgado) and two nearby villages (Mieze and Walupwana), and those in Mueda town (some 400kms north-west of Pemba) and four surrounding villages in Mueda district (Idovo, Mpeme, Miula and Nandimba). Chapter 5 sets out the background to, and logistical issues, affecting my fieldwork, its broader 'natural history' (Silverman, 2010) and the research 'journey' that I have followed.

In terms of methodology, the research questions led logically towards a 'mixed methods' approach (combining quantitative and qualitative elements) and one which linked together a series of short-duration fieldwork visits within a longitudinal framework, permitting me to triangulate or validate my findings across various dimensions. The first phase of empirical research, a rapid appraisal, in April-May 2005, was designed to enumerate the 'target' population of woodcarvers (which amounted to 194 individuals) and thus to establish the basis for a focused and viable sampling frame. The second phase, in July-August 2005, was concerned with undertaking a structured quantitative survey of a purposive sample of 61 woodcarver households (encompassing over 300 individuals) and facilitating group discussions within each village, association or cooperative surveyed (13 in total). The data from carver households were then compared with disaggregated national survey data obtained from INE during a research visit to Maputo in April 2008. Whilst there, discussions with Maputo-based carvers and traders also provided insights into other stages and participants in the wood-carving 'chain'. The third period of fieldwork in northern Mozambique was conducted in May 2010. The main purpose was the collection of life histories from a selected sub-group of (16) carvers interviewed as part of the household survey in 2005, in order to establish a

longitudinal view of the evolution of individual carver livelihoods (or specific livelihood ‘trajectories’). These life histories or biographical interviews were deliberately left until a late stage in the research, because by this point the most important selection criteria for interviewees were clear. In the process, it also became possible, through group discussions and informal conversations, as well as direct observation, to explore wider, and longer-term, changes in the composition and economic well-being of carving groups.

1.4.3 Overarching frameworks for data collection and analysis

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) implicitly guided the first part of the fieldwork (the quantitative survey). However, while the SLF helped provide a partial snapshot of evidence (which could be compared with data from national household surveys), it was not useful for exploring livelihood dynamics. Indeed, while practical in approach, it became clear that the SLF was limited in terms of *explaining* the unique and ‘messy’ reality of Makonde woodcarver livelihoods. The qualitative research that followed this (based largely on key informant interviews, group discussions and life stories) was therefore designed to move the analysis beyond the instrumentality of the SLF (and its emphasis on individual agency and the strategic management of household ‘assets’ or ‘capitals’). The tools of political economy – with its focus on history, social relations and class analysis – was then used as a basis for uncovering processes of stratification and differentiation affecting the woodcarvers. These tools also helped reveal the structure and dynamics of the informal economic enterprises or social networks within which woodcarving is invariably conducted and the interface between the woodcarvers and global markets.

The Global Commodity Chain (GCC)/Global Value Chain (GVC) framework similarly provided practical guidance for describing the ‘global’ woodcarving chain, with an emphasis on identifying the stages (or ‘nodes’) in the ‘chain’ linking raw material to end product and determining how value is distributed between these different ‘nodes’. On a theoretical level the GCC/GVC approach directs attention towards typologies of chain

coordination and governance and the scope for individual economic ‘agents’ to upgrade or improve the benefits they derive from participation in any chain. As I argue, however, these ‘ideal-types’ are of limited value for analysing the impact of the woodcarving ‘chain’ on carver livelihoods. The tendency in the GVC approach to focus too narrowly on the ‘vertical’ economic dimensions of chains, leads to the relative neglect of ‘horizontal’ influences of place and social relations in which they are embedded. Again, the political economy ‘lens’ helps reveal the artificial reification that occurs in chain specification within GVC approaches, emphasising instead their dynamism and possible complexity. The ‘systems of provision’ (sops) approach (Fine and Leopold, 1993; Fine, 2002) takes us furthest in this respect. It offers an alternative way of detailing and exploring the Makonde woodcarving ‘chain’, recognising the need to focus on the unique, historically and geographically contingent nature of the ‘chain’ (or multiple chains) of which the Makonde woodcarvers of northern Mozambique find themselves a part. The relevant literature here includes empirical studies assessing the impact of tourism and other export markets on the livelihood prospects of the carvers. The sops approach also emphasises the importance of social relations that surround and have framed woodcarving activities, historically, and the cultural context within which it is practiced.

1.4.4 Making sense of the data

My empirical findings are presented and discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. The starting point is to use the quantitative survey data to explore some of the key features of carver households in Cabo Delgado and the influences on their livelihoods, with the voices of the carvers being used to add depth and texture to the discussion.

The first chapter (Chapter 6) begins with a mapping of the contemporary woodcarving ‘chain’ and the varied experiences of the woodcarvers within it (this builds on the discussion of the historical evolution of Makonde woodcarving, presented in Chapter 2). The central aim is to describe the structure and relationships of the chain, and its key dynamics. In the second empirical chapter (Chapter 7) I provide a more extensive

analysis of power and governance, links with the market and the scope for ‘upgrading’ that might exist with the woodcarving ‘chain’.

I draw on my survey data to identify the similarities and differences between carvers, measured in terms of both individual characteristics and household attributes. The survey data is used to construct asset indices (focused on living conditions and household possessions) which aim to identify the extent of poverty faced by carver households and the differences between them. Finally, I present a more detailed and nuanced picture of contemporary carver livelihoods – with the aim of identifying changes in their social status over time, patterns of diversification and the ‘exclusivity’ of carving.

While superficially the Makonde wood carvers may appear to display a significant degree of homogeneity in terms of ethnic and geographical origin, skills training and carving styles, in reality they are highly differentiated in terms of personal attributes and household possessions. This suggests that rather than attempting to identify a ‘typical’ carver or to establish broad typologies of carvers, we are better served by using qualitative data (including field notes, responses during group discussions and information gathered from biographical interviews) to contextualise both the generality of carver ‘livelihood trajectories’ and the structural factors influencing individual carver life paths. In Chapter 7, I therefore present excerpts from carver lives within a broader consideration of, in turn, the historical and cultural importance of woodcarving, individual agency and carver social networks, the local economic significance of carving and ‘chain’ governance and the potential for, and limits to, ‘upgrading’ and poverty reduction.

The concluding chapter (Chapter 8) links together evidence and themes arising from the empirical investigation with broader issues outlined in this opening chapter, and proposes potentially fruitful areas for future work. I also critically review questions of process and methodology, looking at possible replication and generalisation of the research. The evidence provided, I contend, demonstrates the power of a micro-level case study, using a ‘mixed methods’ approach to reveal the complexity, ‘messiness’ and

context-specific nature of social reality. It also cautions against the danger of over-reliance on 'synthetic' frameworks (like SL and GVC). Further, the 'longitudinal' approach adopted – several short phases of fieldwork over a five-year period – although forced on me by personal circumstance, offers the opportunity for a unique insight into changing carver lives and livelihood transitions and trajectories.

Chapter 2: Makonde Sculpture as Commodity: the Woodcarving ‘Chain’ as a ‘System of Provision’

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses particularly on questions of value and commodification and the woodcarvers’ place within an expanding and exploitative ‘system of provision’ linked to capitalist development. I build the discussion, firstly, around an explanation of the historical evolution of Makonde woodcarving and its transformation (as both activity and product) as a result of colonialism, and secondly, through a critical examination of the ‘commodity chain’ literature, broadly-defined. The transformation of Makonde woodcarving has been manifested in both stylistic and economic evolution in response to changing forms of patronage and market demand. In the ‘commodity chain’ literature it is the Global Value Chain (GVC) approach that has emerged as the dominant analytical framework over the last fifteen years. However, because of its use of a standardised typology it is exposed as being an oversimplification of what is, in reality, complex, contingent and unique. The chain metaphor within the GVC approach is a useful one, but leads to an excessive concentration on the vertical ‘logic’ of chains. Consequently, there is a neglect of important ‘horizontal’ dimensions at each point in a chain (social relations and networks, cultural value, natural environment, as well as history) which make each a unique ‘system of provision’, linking production and consumption in a dynamic manner.

2.2 The Political Economy of African arts and crafts

2.2.1 Contemporary African woodcarving in historical perspective

The main focus of attention in anthropological and art historical studies of sub-Saharan African arts and crafts, until recently at least, has been on sculpture, an art form ‘scarcely known outside its own continent until late in the nineteenth century’ (Willett, 2002: 26), but with a recorded history extending back in excess of two thousand years. This history, from the earliest terracotta work of the Nok culture in Nigeria to

contemporary sculptures in wood, is now extremely varied in form and style and often highly sophisticated. While it now demonstrates a wide geographical spread, the main concentrations remain associated with the dense rainforest and woodlands in West and Central Africa¹.

Despite European incursions into Africa from the fifteenth century onwards (and the collecting of small carvings in ivory and odd pieces in wood), the systematic 'gathering' of African art/artefacts by Europeans (masks and curios, and then bronze carvings from west Africa) only began in earnest in the nineteenth century, stimulated by missionaries and colonial administrators. More sustained international trade in West African art began during the colonial period in the first two decades of the twentieth century (Steiner, 1994), but later than this (the 1940s and 1950s) in East Africa. My focus is, of course on present-day African art (specifically sculpture in wood in Mozambique), but I recognise that contemporary African art cannot be understood except in its historical context. Fundamental changes occurred in African artistic practice (and in social and economic relations of production) as a result of colonialism and continuing into the post-colonial period, most directly in the economic dependence of artists on European and other foreign patronage. It is also clear, however, that 'contemporary' African art, far from being solely a product of colonial influence, has also been built 'through a process of *bricolage* upon...older, precolonial and colonial genres of African art' (Kasfir, 1999: 9).

Walter Elkan's classic investigation of the woodcarving trade in East Africa (Elkan, 1958) was for many years the only serious treatment of the sector in the development literature, at least in work focused entirely on Africa. His analysis looked at the predominantly small-scale carvers and traders in Kenya who made up the industry (and still do), and the factors behind its success, recognising the emergence of woodcarving as a significant economic activity in terms of employment and, increasingly, export earnings. Although not reported on in any systematic way at the time, the 1950s also

¹ Willett (2002), first published in 1971, remains the classic general text on African art emanating from the art history tradition.

saw a growing export market for Makonde woodcarvers based in Dar es Salaam and south-eastern Tanzania and the concomitant development of new carving styles (Kingdon, 2002; 2005a; 2005b). This issue is pursued further, below.

In the half century since the publication of Elkan's study there has developed a fairly extensive body of literature covering the broad field of African 'art' production, consumption and market evolution, much of this using wood carving and sculpture as its subject matter. Most of the work has emanated from the anthropological, art history or 'cultural' traditions although recently it has become more transdisciplinary in approach, rather than that of development studies or political economy more specifically. From the 1970s, a number of studies were published generally focusing on individual carvers or on specific African woodcarving groups, often based on lengthy and detailed ethnographic research. These examined, to a greater or lesser extent, the nature of the (emerging) market for African woodcarvings, tying this in particular to the growth of tourism and tourist art. One set of studies (exemplified by the work of Bascom, 1974 with the Yoruba or Richter, 1980 with the Kulebele) sought to locate the place and significance of woodcarving and woodcarvers in African society, often profiling significant individual carvers, but privileging the craftsmanship of expert carvers over those involved in the 'manufacture' of objects for the tourist market. An early collection, edited by D'Azevedo (1974), (which, as well as a paper from Bascom, also contains contributions from Messenger and Fernandez focusing on Anang and Fang carvers, respectively) examines the role and work of the 'traditional artist' in these societies and is similarly critical of the lack of 'workmanship' inherent in tourist art². Other studies (see, for instance, Jules-Rosette, 1986, where the focus is on the Kamba carvers in Kenya; and Kasfir, 1992, who based part of her analysis on earlier fieldwork with Makonde carvers in Tanzania and tourist markets in Kenya) have added elements related to the semiotics or 'systems of meanings' that African art producers explicitly build, through new styles or genres, into their work. They explore the bifurcation (or

² The 'traditional artist' is counterpoised by D'Azevedo (1974:11) against those 'who represent new roles and productive processes which have emerged under conditions of European cultural domination and rapid social change in Africa during the twentieth century'. As I show later, the distinction between these two groups is difficult to sustain, to say the least.

trifurcation) of the market for African carvings (between gallery and tourist art, or between art and commodity), issues of 'authenticity' and the complex linkages (with carvings as 'media of communication') between art producers and consumers (or their audience).

Graburn (1976) gave early scholarly attention to the study (and categorisation) of what he labelled 'Ethnic and Tourist Arts' and the emergence of the 'hybrid' as a result of commodification, in place of the historically and culturally-contingent categories of art and artefact or art and craft. More recent work (the 'successor' collection edited by Phillips & Steiner, 1999, for instance) has looked in greater historical and analytical depth at the impact of colonialism and capitalist exchange; put more stress on the 'dynamic agency' of the three groups of relevant 'actors' – artist/producer; intermediaries, and consumers; and, placed more focus on possible multiple implications of 'authenticity' (see Graburn, 1999: 345-353 for an elaboration of this)³. These are key themes which I explore below and return to again in the empirical analysis in Chapters 6 and 7.

The role of intermediaries in the woodcarving trade, neglected in previous studies, was given attention by Steiner (1994). His study, covering the trade in African art in Côte d'Ivoire, takes as its focus of analysis a group of merchants who act as middlemen between artists or object owners and Western buyers, including tourists. He gives specific attention to two aspects. Firstly, the process of commodification and the way in which value is assigned to art 'objects' at different stages in the 'network of trade' and, secondly, the role these merchants play as 'mediators of knowledge' between the producers and consumers of this art (Steiner, 1994: 13-14). This conceptualisation of the particular 'vertical logic' of the woodcarving trade is taken further later (Section 2.2.7), but first, however, I intend to discuss the specifics of the Makonde woodcarving 'tradition' in more detail.

³ Other work has looked at 'Western' consumption of 'non-Western' art, of which African art objects form a part, looking at how these objects are de-contextualised when they are displaced (physically and symbolically) from their original 'cultural meaning' (see Price, 1989 and Phillips & Steiner, 1999).

2.3 Makonde woodcarving: from 'tradition' to 'modernity'

2.3.1 What has been written about Makonde woodcarving?

The published literature on the Makonde woodcarvers tends on the whole to be more limited than that of many other sculptural traditions in Africa, but a similar disciplinary provenance and analytical emphasis can be recognised⁴. The earliest works, some produced as guide to, or commentary on, a particular exhibition (for example, Stout, 1966; Korn, 1974; Coote, 1989), focused on the aesthetics and meaning of Makonde sculpture. Work presented in exhibitions was generally restricted to what was considered to be 'traditional' art, deliberately eschewing examples of more recent work. The exhibition, *Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art* (The Center for African Art, New York), for instance, despite its apparent contemporary focus, did not present any Makonde work made after the 1940s, and presented only initiation masks, not figurative sculpture. Further, '(i)n many of these exhibitions the diversity of the artistic discourses and the personalities of the artists remained in the background or even anonymous' (Projecto Arte Makonde, 1999: 6)⁵. As West and Sharpes (2002: 7) point out, with many commentators having undertaken 'only superficial, if any, field research with the artists themselves (not to mention their broader communities)', their interpretation of the thinking behind the work, and the broader context within which it was produced, was bound to be limited.

Other scholarship, in contrast to a lack of concern with 'cultural context', has included woodcarving as part of a broader discussion of Makonde cultural 'tradition' (Dias & Dias, 1970; Dias, 1973; Duarte, 1987) and within discourses of cultural and political 'resistance' to colonialism within Mozambique (Alpers, 1983; 1989; Stephen, 1990).

⁴ Willett (op.cit.) includes two chapters on African sculpture, but gives only a brief mention to Makonde woodcarving. Kasfir (1999) gives more attention to Makonde sculpture in her excellent review of post-colonial art in Africa, reflecting its relatively recent rise to prominence or 'artistic renaissance' (West and Sharpes, 2002).

⁵ The *Magiciens de la Terre* exhibition in Paris in 1989, was an exception as it featured the work of John Fundi, a Dar es Salaam based sculptor. See profile article by Alpers (2004). This quotation comes from the Foreword to the catalogue produced for the Arte Makonde: Caminhos Recentes (Makonde Art: Recent Pathways) exhibition at the National Museum of Art in Maputo in 1999 (Projecto Arte Makonde, 1999).

Shore-Bos (1969), Kasfir (1980) and Hirsch (1993) discussed the impact of commercialisation (and the influence of patronage) on Makonde artistic production, themes taken up later by West and Sharpes (2002: 2), who emphasised that the 'essential dynamic of its historical reproduction and evolution' make the traditional/authentic and modern/commercial dichotomies untenable.

The most comprehensive recent analysis of Makonde sculpture and the artistic motivation that lay/lies behind it has come from Zachary Kingdon (2002; 2005a; 2005b)⁶. Uniquely, he places particular emphasis on the significance of African blackwood (*mpingo*) as the dominant carving medium for contemporary Makonde sculpture and the way in which, he believes, following its more widespread adoption it transformed both the role and identity of carvers. I discuss the importance of this argument, below (see Section 2.3.3). The main geographical focus of Kingdon's important work has been on the Makonde woodcarvers based in Tanzania (Dar es Salaam and Mtwara, in particular), rather than those living and working in the villages and towns of northern Mozambique (or elsewhere in the country). Although this can be justified by the key part played by Tanzanian-based carvers in the stylistic evolution and commercial development of contemporary Makonde sculpture from the 1950s onwards, the systems of patronage and market conditions under which it was produced were very different to those pertaining in Mozambique (see Kingdon, 2002 & 2005b and discussion in Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3, below). West and Sharpes (2002) suggest that the Mozambican carvers may also have a different interpretation of the meaning of specific stylistic 'sub-genres' to their Tanzanian counterparts; here they are referring to various categories of '*shetani*', but my research suggests the differences in meaning may also extend to other carving styles (see Section 2, Chapter 6)⁷. Like Kingdon, Kacimi and Sulger (2004) concentrate on the sculptors themselves, using a series of

⁶ The work built on eighteen months of ethnographic fieldwork with migrant Makonde woodcarvers in Tanzania in the early 1990s as part of his doctoral research at UEA (Kingdon, 1994).

⁷ Contemporary Mozambican Makonde sculptures generally fall into three recognizable types: the *shetani* (devil) or spirit figures; *ujamaa* (togetherness), composite carvings of interlinked or interlocking human figures and finally, *binadamu* (naturalistic human figures and 'themes of life', sometimes known as *Familia*). The Makonde also continue to produce styles with a religious (Christian) content. However, there are a number of variations within each one of the styles (as well as composites of more than one style) and great differences in the level of sophistication and scale (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004).

interviews with 12 ‘masters’ to give them voice, but focus their study on Cabo Delgado, in northern Mozambique. Around these insightful personal histories they weave a description of carving styles and commercialisation and economic change, but do not extend this to an analysis of carver livelihoods in any systematic manner. While the work of Kingdon, and Kacimi and Sulger has offered invaluable contextual material for the current research, its emphasis has been different. Its main focus (and that of the literature that came before it) has been on the art object and on stylistic development and meaning, rather than on the carvers as individual artisans and as members of carving groups or ‘networks’.

2.3.2 The historical and cultural roots of Makonde woodcarving

The early origins of woodcarving can only be more completely understood with reference to some key features of Makonde culture and society, particularly its matrilineal structure and initiation rituals. From their arrival on the Mueda plateau in the 18th century until the late colonial period the Makonde (*pl. Vamakonde*) lived in dispersed village settlements based around a given *likola* (or matrilineal kinship unit). However, while name and property (houses and *mashamba*) were handed down through the mother, political and social power resided in the male *nangolo* (or village ‘chief), who might be the uncle, the brother or the eldest nephew of the mother (Wembah-Rashid, 1998). He surrounded himself with his nephews and nieces, as his own children would be living in their own *likola* (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004). In this way, men controlled the kinship group’s productive and reproductive resources. While the matrilineal focus of Makonde society has largely been maintained (Sheldon, 2002), the traditional family-based village structures were effectively undermined first by Portuguese policies of ‘forced villagisation’ during the Independence struggle of the 1960s and later by FRELIMO’s reorganization of the rural population into ‘communal villages’ in the 1970s and 1980s (see Chapter 4). Nowadays, even though children may live with their biological parents the uncle is still invariably regarded as the ‘social father’ of the children of his sisters and nieces (Wembah-Rashid, 1998; Kacimi and Sulger, 2004).

It is the initiation ceremonies that appear to have supported the broader development of carving activity in 19th century Makonde society and culture. According to Israel (2005: 99), the *mapiko* masquerades of the Makonde are ‘almost unique in the East African cultural landscape, which otherwise lacks masked dancing’. Although relatively little is known of their history, these masquerades have played an important role in Makonde society since colonial times, if not before. The initiation of boys and girls (post puberty) was/is a ‘rite of passage’ from childhood which permits them to be integrated into the adult world. These rites (the *likumbi* for males and *ingoma* for females) take place in the ‘bush’ and involve a period of seclusion; this formerly lasted three months or more (Saetersdal, 1998), but now lasts only three weeks, often due to ‘scholastic demands’ (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004), indicating a diminishing of its significance as cultural ‘rite of passage’⁸. Despite the secrecy surrounding initiation, the *mapiko* dance or masquerade itself was performed in public⁹, although the masks are never (or at least rarely) seen publicly outside of the masquerade. Traditionally, the *lipiko* (pl. *mapiko*) mask was produced from a special piece of wood, using a particular ‘production process’¹⁰; carving took place secretly in the bush, with the mask being hidden out of sight once complete. The mask, which depicts a realistic human face or a caricature of a ‘social figure’, is made of lightweight wood (usually *njala*), coloured with grey, ochre or red pigments and sometimes showing scarification (simulated using beeswax), and wearing a hat or with real hair. Kacimi and Sulger (2004: 20) believe that it is because of the *mapiko* ‘rituals’ (and the wooden masks that play a central part in their performance) that sculpting has had such a prominent (and continuing) role in Makonde culture.

In pre-colonial times, ‘most adult Makonde men acquired basic wood-shaping skills, and those who enjoyed woodcarving and coveted a good reputation could become well-known and sought after for their expertise’ (Kingdon, 2005a: 54). However there were no specialist full-time carvers in Makonde society at the time; for all, apart from the clan

⁸ This issue – the shortened period of seclusion – was commented upon by many of the older carvers during my fieldwork, often with some regret (see Chapter 7).

⁹ As Israel (2005: 100) points out, while the *mapiko* performance is centred very much around initiated males, the women also have their own masquerade (*nkamangu*) for female initiates, but this is performed in private, with the dancers wearing masks of clay (*shitengamoto*).

¹⁰ This includes ‘an offering to the tree spirit’ and ‘ash from a fire made from the wood shavings being smeared on the carver’s face’ (Saeterdal, 1998: 301).

leader (or *humu*) and possibly some hunters, agriculture was the only full-time economic activity. No formal system of apprenticeship existed; individuals were free to learn from each other (Kingdon, 2002). Although the skills and creativity of the best carvers might be admired, specialist activities (like carving or pottery) were not held in particularly high regard either morally or as an economic activity (Kingdon, 2005a).

‘Traditional’ Makonde carving was thus focused on the *mapiko* masquerade masks used as part of initiation and other small figurative or functional items. The translation into non-functional, sculptural forms was driven, many have argued, by incorporation into the colonial economy. West and Sharpes (2002) suggest that initial Portuguese demand for Makonde carvings – a century ago or so – could well have been prompted by them seeing small functional wooden items being traded with coastal-based merchants (possibly at Mocimboa da Praia). After the Portuguese conquest and occupation of the Mueda plateau in 1917, European administrators and concession company officials (see Chapter 7) began to purchase ‘items of Makonde material culture’ (like finely-carved bottle stoppers and other figurative pieces). In response, the carvers began to produce commercial versions for sale to help pay the newly-imposed taxes (Kingdon, 2002; 2005a; 2005b). From the early 1920s, many Makonde, carvers among them, were driven by punitive taxes and the threat of forced labour to migrate northwards across the Rovuma river to the sisal plantations in Tanzania (Alpers, 1987).

There is common agreement that the first non-functional objects produced specifically for sale to Europeans were made by Nyekenya Nangundu in Miula village, on the Mueda plateau, in the mid-to-late 1920s (Kingdon, 2002)¹¹. The first item appears to have been a small flat-bottomed Makonde head (perhaps 5-10cm in height), made from light white wood. Later, the Portuguese commissioned animals and realistic figurative carvings of Makonde in daily pursuits (the seated smoker, a woman carrying a water pot etc), a genre which became known as *binadamu*. Portuguese buyers expressed a preference for the carvings they commissioned to be made from hard wood; Kingdon

¹¹ Kingdon (2005a) suggests that both Nyekenya’s father and maternal grandfather were carvers of *mapiko* masks amongst other things; Nyekenya himself carved figurative gourd stoppers (out of light wood) and lip plugs (from blackwood/mpingo).

(2005a) believes, on the basis of interviews with several Makonde sculptors, that Nyekenya himself chose blackwood for the purpose¹². This marked an important stylistic as well as economic departure from what had come before. West and Sharpes (2002: 4) suggest that the production of 'commercial versions of ritual objects' led to them becoming highly stylised (or, indeed, commodified); Kingdon (2005b: 14), too, talks of Nyekenya's development of a 'genre of commercial sculpture distinct from indigenous forms', which had the aim of generating a cash income to offset (or resist) the impact of colonial taxation. Nyekenya taught other men in Miula to carve without requiring payment and initially continued to carve part-time around his farming work; as demand grew, however, he began carving full-time (West and Sharpes, 2002). From Miula, commercial blackwood carving spread to other villages on the Mueda plateau and via Makonde migrants to Tanzania, but has retained a remarkable (sub-) ethnic homogeneity¹³. However, while the imperative for developing woodcarving skills was (and remains) primarily economic, Kingdon (2002) makes a strong case for regarding blackwood (mpingo) carving among the Makonde as much as a *cultural* 'movement', with blackwood, itself, being 'metaphorically linked with personhood', an issue I pursue further below.

2.3.3 Livelihoods and stylistic innovation in Cabo Delgado and Dar es Salaam

Growing patronage by administrators and missionaries based on the Mueda plateau and elsewhere in Cabo Delgado from the 1920s and 1930s onwards inevitably drew the carvers more fully into the colonial economy and helped to transform both style and technique of production (towards what Kingdon, 2002, calls 'modern' Makonde sculpture). Work was increasingly directly commissioned, often involving the copying of printed images (photographs or bible illustrations) or existing artefacts (crucifixes or Madonna figurines). Although this reproduction of existing images or artefacts led to

¹² African blackwood has a number of qualities that make it highly suitable for intricate carving (see Chapter 6).

¹³ According to Kingdon (2005a: 56) '(E)ven today...most Makonde carvers working both in Tanzania and Mozambique belong to one or other of the four dominant clans who made their original home in the Miula area – namely, the Chumbuji, the Vianda, the Mwilu and the Mwanga.

some stylistic adaptation (including, for instance, the production of European-style blackwood busts), it was the changing economic role of some of the carvers – as they became self-employed artisans or waged employees – that was more fundamental and far-reaching in effect (Alpers, 1983). At the same time there was increasing appreciation of the aesthetic qualities, extending beyond mere craftsmanship, of the woodcarvings being produced. The first formal recognition of ‘modern’ Makonde sculpture as contemporary ‘art’ can be dated back to the exhibition at the Centro Cultural dos Novos in Maputo in the early 1930s (Kasfir, 1999). ‘Western’ galleries and museums – as international arbiters of artistic ‘worth’ – were much slower to recognise the validity of ‘modern’ Makonde sculpture as ‘art’ form¹⁴. The complex issues surrounding the categorisation of Makonde woodcarvings are explored later in this chapter.

In the 1940s and 1950s the Makonde woodcarving ‘trade’ in Cabo Delgado (and elsewhere in Mozambique) became more established and complex. Portuguese colonial officers themselves began to act as intermediaries (as well as ‘patrons’) as they ‘built up large collections of blackwood carvings and often supplemented their incomes by selling Makonde sculpture’ (Kingdon, 2005a: 56-57). A sub-set of carvers were able to enjoy ‘privileged status’, either through obtaining a carver’s licence (which gave exemption from forced labour) or by gaining full-time employment (combining carving and other duties) with colonial officials and Catholic missions¹⁵. The missions shipped carvings to Europe to help supplement their income (Saetersdal, 1998). This was a period of rising blackwood carving sales in Mozambique during which ‘both the local Portuguese ruling class and growing South African tourist trade assured interested Makonde artists of a steadily growing market for their wares’ (Alpers, 1983: 164). However, this growth in

¹⁴ This is in contrast to institutions in Mozambique and Tanzania themselves, which are less reticent to display ‘modern’ works. The Mozambique National Gallery of Art in Maputo contained (in 2008) 15 Makonde sculptures with the majority large *mashetani* dating from after 1975. In contrast, the Tanzanian National Museum in Dar es Salaam displayed sculptures largely of the *ujamaa* genre, but also gathered in the post-Independence period (ie after 1960). (Field Notes, April 2005; April 2008). Of course, most of the older, more valuable pieces would have been sold abroad or otherwise transferred to Western institutions or private owners.

¹⁵ In the biographical interview with FM (17th May, 2010) he recounts how he and his older brother worked at Lipelua Mission in Mueda district in the 1950s as ‘priest’s employees’, carving ‘elephant bones and also *mpingo*’. This employment made them ‘exempt from any compulsory work forced by the Portuguese state’.

demand is likely to have been centred on Maputo as the main destination for South African visitors, with the opportunities for direct carving sales to tourists in northern Mozambique limited by the nascent nature of the tourist industry there. Limited local patronage in Cabo Delgado, similarly, would not alone have been able to support large numbers of carvers.

The 1950s and early 1960s saw an intensification of the forced labour system in northern Mozambique (see Chapter 4). Coupled with (the ‘pull’ of) growing employment opportunities in the Tanzanian sisal industry and other foreign-owned enterprises, this prompted increased Makonde migration northward across the Rovuma river (Alpers, 1987; Kingdon, 2005a). Many younger Makonde carvers migrated to south eastern Tanzania and settled there, or moved further north, to Dar es Salaam and beyond. A dramatic expansion in European and North American tourism in East Africa (in Kenya and Tanzania, in particular) after the Second World War led to a rapidly growing market for locally-produced arts and crafts, including Makonde woodcarvings. However, while those carvers who settled in southern Tanzania continued to produce fairly standardised *binadamu* for the export market¹⁶ or religious artefacts for local missions, the Mozambican migrants in Dar es Salaam became responsible (from the late 1950s onwards) for some of the most original stylistic innovations (the *shetani* genre being the best known) in ‘modern’ Makonde sculpture. That they were able to do so was at least partly because of the system of patronage that existed there, particularly that offered by Mohamed Peera, who together with his brothers had begun selling Makonde carvings to the American market from the mid-1950s.

Kingdon (2002; 2005a; 2005b) has written at length about the pivotal role played by Mohamed Peera in the development of the Makonde woodcarving ‘movement’ in Dar es

¹⁶ Norman Kirk, a New Zealander with citrus orchards in Mahurunga just north of the Rovuma river, built up a substantial business exporting Makonde carvings in the 1950s and 1960s. Kingdon (2005a: 57) reports that while he appears to have paid the carvers reasonably well, he also applied a variable scale of payment based on the quality of the carvings which ‘inspired a level of competition among the carvers’. He also enforced a high level of standardisation (in terms of themes and scale) in order to maximise export sales, which will have had the impact of stifling stylistic innovation.

Salaam and more widely¹⁷. Most of the carvers involved, although originating from Mozambique, had learnt to carve in Dar es Salaam from fellow migrants. The lack of direct links with the Mozambican Makonde blackwood carving 'school' appears to have been important in the development of fresh ideas and innovative approaches to both style and technique, as well as in their more entrepreneurial focus. Many of the carvers had recently been displaced (as 'waged labour') by the collapse of the sisal industry in Tanzania, some migrating to Dar es Salaam from the south of the country; a few were able to take up carving as a 'full-time' profession. According to Kingdon (2005b: 14), Mohamed Peera did not rigidly impose the need for a specific form or style of carving, but encouraged 'originality and creative competitiveness among the carvers'; this 'friendly rivalry gave rise to creative innovation' (West and Sharpes, 2002: 6) allowing most carvers to further develop their skills. Peera supplied the carvers with wood and bought almost everything they produced 'although he paid more for more expressive and original work' (Kingdon, 2005a: 58). In Kingdon's view, Peera's particular form of patronage evolved as a kind of 'dialogue' with individual sculptors which recognised them as 'artists' or 'highly original creative agents with complex 'artistic' identities' (Kingdon, 2005b: 14), rather than simply craftsmen. It was this environment that gave rise to the new genre and style of carving most commonly known as *shetani* (usually translated as devil or Satan)¹⁸ and now widely produced by Makonde carvers throughout Tanzania and Mozambique (see the discussion based on my field notes in Chapter 6). This new genre certainly broadened the scope for individual (and collective) innovation, freeing the carvers from the constraints of 'traditional' sculptural forms. In other words, the innovation enabled 'idiosyncratic artists ... to pursue personal visions within a socially determined aesthetic language' (Dutton, 2003). It also led to greater

¹⁷ Kingdon's account of Mohamed Peera and the part he played was reportedly based upon an interview with Peera in Paris in 1992 (see Kingdon, 2002) as well as the recollections of some of the carvers involved during the former's fieldwork in Tanzania in 1992 and 1993. Mohamed Peera himself had published a partly autobiographical piece in *African Arts* in 1970. Kingdon believes that, like the carvers, Peera also underwent a kind of 'apprenticeship' and 'transformation' in his role as patron (Kingdon, 2005a: 60).

¹⁸ In Shimakonde these sculptures are called *nnandenga*, but are also known in Kiswahili as *jini* (from the Arabic *djinn*) (Kasfir, 1999: 110). Most accounts (see Kingdon, 2002, for instance) identify Samaki Likankoa, a Muedan migrant who arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1958 and thereafter began to sell carvings to Mohamed Peera, as the originator of the first *shetani* (and which he named as such) in 1959. The style (which proved to be highly 'saleable') was quickly copied by many of his fellow carvers.

stratification, with the most skilled of the *shetani* carvers able to command much higher prices for their work, leaving the majority of the carvers producing items for the mass 'tourist market'.

The 'meaning(s)' ascribed to the *mashatani* (plural of *shetani*) sculptures remain contested, even amongst the carvers themselves. Kingdon (2002), perhaps inevitably given the geographic focus of his fieldwork, considers that *mashatani* represent 'spirits' or 'mystical beings' associated with Muslim or Swahili cosmology. He linked this interpretation to the circumstances surrounding the production of the first *shetani* by the carver Samaki for Mohamed Peera, and the former's 'ambiguous status identity', as, at the time, somewhere between artisan and artist. He also suggests that Samaki metaphorically associated the role of carver as 'creative agent' with that of the 'spirit controller' (or outside force), counterpoised against that of conventional leaders in Swahili social authority (Kingdon, 2005b). Kasfir (1999: 109-110), too, sees the *shetani* genre as a 'radical departure' from precolonial Makonde art, but she believes that its iconography draws closely on Makonde oral traditions and masquerades from the Mueda plateau in Mozambique. She believes that unlike the 'angular realism' that characterised pre-colonial and early colonial Makonde sculpture, the new (*shetani*) sculpture was anti-naturalistic and frequently employed social caricature. West and Sharpes (2002) link the *shetani* sculptures produced by contemporary woodcarvers in Mueda (and elsewhere in Mozambique) to the world of sorcery and to living beings (both good and bad) able to transform themselves into sorcerers¹⁹. There is a connection here with Kingdon's (2005b: 63-65) suggestion that for many carvers blackwood (or *mpingo*) as a raw material is itself a metaphor of human beings or personhood, or the 'inner substance of being'. This anthropomorphism is extended to the *mashatani* themselves which one carver (Kashmiri Matayo) described as resembling badly defined human beings with 'many mistakes', a counterpart to a complete human being. The *mashatani* might also be viewed as a creative response to the carvers'

¹⁹ Harry West (1997; 2005) has written extensively about the place of sorcery (*uwavi*) within an evolving discourse of power and knowledge among the Makonde inhabitants on the Mueda plateau.

diasporic life in Dar es Salaam, one of the ways in which the Makonde migrants were able to 'reinvent their culture in the alien landscape of Tanzania' (Kasfir, 1992: 22).

2.3.4 Makonde woodcarving as 'expression of resistance' and 'revolutionary art'

As I have stressed, from the 1930s onwards the woodcarvings produced by the Makonde, as well as offering a form of income for some carvers, also provided a useful medium for satirising colonial institutions as a form of opposition, and as a means of expressing common suffering (Kingdon, 2002). Oguibe (2002: 37) portrays the 'artists persistence with tradition' as not just an aesthetic statement, but part of a 'contest of identities which signalled the beginnings of a new discourse of nationalism'. Writing particularly about Makonde sculpture, Alpers (1983: 144), sets out a convincing case for viewing 'traditional' culture as one of the most important popular expressions of resistance to the brutality and humiliation of colonialism in Mozambique. He states that '...these cultural expressions also served the additional function of asserting the values of specific African cultures against the dehumanisation of colonialism, which either attempted to reduce Africans to nameless and faceless units of labour or relegate them to obscurity'. This 'resistance' was also manifested in successive waves of migration northwards to Tanzania; later, the Makonde diaspora there helped nurture and support the Mozambican liberation movement (see Chapter 4).

FRELIMO launched the armed struggle (in Cabo Delgado) in September 1964; in the late 1960s, heavy fighting led to a further mass exodus of Makonde to Tanzania. However, by the end of 1965 most of the traditional Makonde area had been formed into liberated zones and FRELIMO organised agricultural collectives for food and exports. The local Makonde carvers, too, were also organised into 'cooperatives', producing for export, with the sale of Makonde carvings generating money for FRELIMO forces engaged in armed resistance against the Portuguese, but also supporting carver

livelihoods²⁰. These cooperatives meant that carvers could obtain their timber supplies collectively, reduce costs and market their products together (including those channelled through the international solidarity networks) to improve carver returns (West and Sharpes, 2002). FRELIMO'S patronage also had a significant influence on the subject matter of carvings. New themes emerged. Earlier religious themes were superseded by 'revolutionary art' – depicting the oppression and subjugation, but also the strength, of the Mozambican people²¹. These images of resistance formed part of an emerging Mozambican national consciousness (Stephen, 1990).

FRELIMO's attitude to 'traditional' Mozambican culture was, however, ambivalent, at least initially. While the '...radically modernist ideology of the party despised and condemned most rural cultural practices as primitive, obscurantist and superstitious' (Israel 2005: 112), from the late 1960s, FRELIMO also developed programmes that supported and transformed local expressions of music, dance and sculpture as a way of building a multi-ethnic Mozambique and its 'cultural unification'. Makonde sculpture was a prime example of an emerging 'national' culture which, given its international popularity, was embraced by Mozambican intellectuals as a national symbol. (Alpers, 1983; Sheldon, 2002). However, the liberation war and its aftermath, including a greater exposure to the market and the creation of a 'new social order' in the countryside based on FRELIMO's communal villages, is likely to have undermined the kinship (and village)-based carving groups. In addition many carvers had migrated to Tanganyika or had been displaced by the liberation war (taking refuge in Tanzania or Malawi) and/or the subsequent South African-backed 'civil war' between RENAMO and FRELIMO, but returned to live and work in northern Mozambique (particularly Pemba) in the 1980s and 1990s (Kacimi & Sulger, 2004). For both constituencies of carvers a new commercial imperative had begun to pervade their work which in some quarters has led to ambiguity about the status of contemporary Makonde woodcarving. That is, whether

²⁰ MN, Group Discussion, Association Combatentes Aldeia, Nandimba village, 15th July 2005; biographical interview, May, 2010.

²¹ FRELIMO supported the production of carvings in the *ujamaa* style, representing 'familyhood' or communality, in particular. This genre was developed in Tanzania by Mozambican Makonde migrant carvers, but had links it is suggested (West and Sharpes, 2002) to earlier Makonde styles depicting matrilineal *likola*.

it can still be considered as art and as 'authentic Mozambican culture', rather than simply an 'economic activity'. This ambiguity relates to a broader debate over the nature of woodcarvings as 'authentic' art form or as commodity, a debate which is firmly located in the historical evolution of African art and crafts. This is a discussion to which I now turn.

2.4 African Art and Craft: Commercialisation, Commodification and the Tourist Market

As Kasfir (1992; 1999) points out, for African art the 'modern' came hand in hand with colonialism, which restructured artistic practice, methods of production and local perceptions of sculpture and sculpting. Colonialism ultimately gave rise to, as I have shown, emergent systems of patronage, changes from kinship or village-based production to cooperatives and evolving genres and themes (including the deep impact of religion, both Christianity and Islam, on designs and styles). Until relatively recently, most writing on African arts and craft was couched in a fictional and timeless 'ethnographic past' (Kasfir, 1992) – the idea of an unchanging cultural, political and economic landscape prior to colonial contact - within which an old 'traditional', authentic art could be compared with a new 'modern' inauthentic, present-day 'commodity'. In places (like Cabo Delgado) where a strong pre-existing visual art tradition (eg wood sculpture) was able to withstand the transformations of the colonial period, it has been possible for carvers to tap into 'traditional' belief systems and artistic practices; in other words, to 'evoke a past which speaks to the present' (Parkin, 2001: 133). The continuity of practice, in terms of kinship-based training and apprenticeship, meant that new genres and forms could be easily developed. In the pre-colonial world, woodcarvings did not occupy the 'privileged sphere' of 'art', distinguishable from other objects; although the quality of carving was high, aside from the Mapiko masks, there was little to distinguish Makonde artistic styles from those of other sculptural traditions and individual carvers remained anonymous. However, commercialisation of woodcarving inevitably gave rise to a growing tension between 'traditional' collaborative systems of

work (where one artist worked with and emulated another, around established styles) and individual artistic initiatives pursued by the most expert carvers.

‘Traditional’ Makonde woodcarving was inherently ‘non-professional’ (beyond the gender division of labour), with individuals producing sculptures on a part-time basis. Although this remains the case for most rural carvers – with farming demands limiting carving activity to the dry season – several of the urban-based carvers (in Pemba, Nampula, Maputo and indeed Dar es Salaam) now sculpt full-time (see the evidence provided in Chapter 6). In his work on West Africa, Willett (2002: 202-203) identifies a clear distinction between those ethnic groups where sculpting is ‘fundamentally non-professional’ (the Tiv, Fanti and many Igbo groups) and others (the Yoruba) where it is ‘a strictly professional affair’, with the profession usually running in families. He suggests that there may be a link between a ‘professional’ art tradition and ‘authenticity’, which he (too) narrowly equates with ‘a lack of susceptibility to outside stylistic influence’.

In Western artistic/aesthetic terms, there are two senses in which the distinction between the authentic and inauthentic came to be framed (Dutton, 2003). Firstly, the idea that works of art can possess *nominal authenticity* (ie that the origins, creative authorship or provenance of an object are properly identified), which can be effectively determined by ‘empirical discovery’. The second, more contentious, notion is to establish whether an object has *expressive authenticity*; that is, how far it is a true expression of the values and beliefs held by the individual, group or society from which it emerges. The question of whether an art form (like a ‘contemporary’ Makonde sculpture) is a legitimate cultural expression – and therefore expressively authentic - relates to ideas of continuity and audience (Shelton, 1992). It is possible, as Jules-Rosette (1986: 56) points out, to conceive of tourist art objects as ‘symbols of change’ and as a ‘reaffirming and positive form of cultural expression’, which generate valuable economic and symbolic exchange. There are two key questions here: firstly, are we able to trace an ‘organic evolution’ of form(s) from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’ Makonde sculpture? ; and, secondly, even if the sculptures are now ostensibly made for a

different ('external') market or audience, what do they express about contemporary Makonde life and concerns? Artistic 'worth' might still emerge if individual sensibility and expression mesh with the cultural beliefs of the artist's immediate community. Kasfir (1992; 1999), for instance, believes that while the *mashetani* were explicitly produced for non-Makonde buyers and therefore were destined to be art-market or tourist-market 'commodities' they drew directly on Makonde oral traditions and therefore demonstrated 'continuity' from traditional forms.

Kasfir (1999: 102) explores the notion that for 'art' to be genuine and authentic it must be free of commercial motive, but finds that the categorisations that result (of art, craft and commodity)²², which are based on 'European aesthetics', do not satisfactorily reflect African cultural and economic realities. The 'West' not only assumes the power and authority to re-present the culture of 'Others', but in the process becomes 'the guardian of the 'authenticity' of the colonised cultures' (Sardar, 2002: 13). As Phillips and Steiner (1999: 4) point out, the 'art' objects of cultural 'Others' have been subject to processes of commodification from as far back as the 18th century, if not before. These processes intensified during the Victorian era, when markets for 'traditional' art and artefacts began to coexist with a growing souvenir trade based around tourism. There was increasing scope for direct interaction between producer and consumer. The narrowing of the distance between maker and buyer stimulated both the replication of 'traditional' objects and the production of new stylistically 'hybrid' (or commoditised) forms and artistic identities (Steiner, 1994; 1999).

According to Steiner (1994), an artwork becomes a commodity once it moves into a system of exchange. For Kasfir (1999: 130), the process of commodification occurs much earlier than this and is linked to the producer's intention; '(a)rtists working in cooperatives have a clear goal when they make something – it is to be sold. Its commodity status is therefore unambiguous at all stages in the creation process.' However, it is also the case that in the facture of woodcarvings (compared to craftwork,

²² She identifies two kinds of distinction here. One linked to the bifurcation between (non-utilitarian) art and (utilitarian) craft and a second based on the differentiation between (non-commercial) art and (commercial) commodity.

like weaving or basket making, for instance), replication is at best inexact, the carvings are subject to natural variation and the skill of the artist is more visible. The uniqueness that results is likely to permit some resistance to commodification.

Commodification may also have an ambiguous impact on the carvers themselves. Richter's (1980) fieldwork with the Kulebele carvers of northern Ivory Coast in the mid-1970s suggested that while commodification lowered the overall quality of carving (with more 'barely competent hack carvers' and mediocre carvers drawn into production to mass produce items for the tourist market), it had the opposite effect on the best carvers, in this way fuelling internal differentiation. The latter, 'masters' or most accomplished carvers, continued to produce carvings for local rituals, while having pieces commissioned by international dealers. For them, the export market improved the returns they received, giving them the opportunity to carve full-time and improve their skills. Kasfir (1980; 1992) undertook fieldwork with the Makonde and Kamba (in Kenya) in the late 1970s. She found that in contrast to the Kamba (who mainly produce highly naturalistic animal sculpture, firmly on the commercial side of the art/commodity divide), the Makonde sculptors of Mozambique and Tanzania 'raise awkward questions for Western museums regarding the entangled issue of commodification' (Kasfir, 1999: 109). As she points out, there are pre-colonial examples of Makonde sculpture in various ethnology collections 'which predate its entry into the export market'. However, it is also the case, as I have shown, that contemporary Makonde sculpture is markedly different in both raw material and style from many of its pre-colonial forms – with the naturalistic *binadamu* and anti-naturalistic *shetani* sub-styles as 'a perfect bifurcation between a pre-colonial self-contained symmetry and a post-colonial expressionism' (Kasfir, 1992: 19).

Nevertheless, the site or place of the transaction also matters for the nature of the interaction between seller and buyer. Based on fieldwork in the Ivory Coast, Zambia and Kenya, Jules-Rosette (1986) concluded that there was not a single tourist market, but rather a series of intersecting markets (village market, urban market, the curio trade and the gallery connection) to which (tourists and) artists in various settings respond

differently. This may involve some 'collusion' between artist and buyer as well as negotiation, with the person 'with whom the tourist interacts in the marketplace...assumed to have a close cultural link to the items being sold' (Hitchcock, 2000: 5), which of course may not always be the case. The discourse between producer and buyer surrounding the transaction may give an opportunity to explore the meanings of a piece of art or artefact; commodification, on the other hand, requires ambiguity.

As well as prompting the creation of new artistic forms, the international tourist market (or markets) can also have an ambiguous impact on local art and craft production in terms of social relations of production (Richter, 1980). The pursuit of monetary return through 'art' may indeed problematise social relations in part by placing the 'bounded individual into the foreground of social life' and in this way undermining group motivation' (Phillips and Steiner, 1999: 62). However, the 'tourist' as consumer may not be the crucial distinction here and indeed, to highlight this, Barber (1987) prefers to describe tourist art as 'commercially-motivated popular art'. Evans (2000: 127) considers the label (of) tourist art to be 'inadequate or at best misleading'. The assumption is that what is produced given the volume of tourist sales is (mistakenly) believed to be 'cheap, crude and mass-produced' (Kasfir, 1992) and that this mass production implies standardisation. In this way tourism, like the growing 'fair trade' market, which now sits alongside it, has been accused of promoting commodification through 'mechanical reproduction', involving role (and style) specialization and the repetition of certain forms. However, there are also examples of tourist art which have fostered individuality (at the expense of group cohesion), with competition between carvers to be 'unique' and originality and innovation occurring frequently. These elements are all reflected in the work of the Makonde carvers encountered in this study, reinforcing the view that commercialisation, while opening up (artistic and economic) opportunities for some has also led to increasing differentiation and stratification.

The type of tourism or its focus (see Chapter 4) and the motivation of the tourist will also have a bearing on the art/craft items demanded, with educated or affluent tourists likely to be more concerned with 'authenticity' (Hitchcock, 2000) and to emphasise the

'handmade'. The production of souvenirs²³ sought after by long-haul tourists are inevitably subject to limitations of size and weight. They are also required to fulfill the expectations (or 'stereotypical perceptions') of travelers. These expectations may be built from prior visits or through learning about cultures and cultural products via the Internet (see Molony, 2005). The market place (or 'transaction sites') for souvenirs is also likely to be now rather more complex (Evans, 2000). Tourists can access arts and crafts via intermediaries (traders, craft shop, galleries, mail order/Internet) and some distance from the producer and place of facture.

More than two decades ago Bennitta Jules-Rosette (1986: 57) wrote, in the context of the trade in African arts and crafts, that in the future 'tourist art will be likely to constitute a significant reflection of the interface between local African markets and the world economy'. Tourism has indeed provided a growing market for Makonde woodcarvings in recent years, but as I have indicated it has also been associated with increasing commodification in terms of carving styles and changing market and production relationships, within an evolving international division of labour. The carvers now find themselves at the bottom of an international woodcarving 'chain' linking them (often, but not exclusively, via the tourist) inextricably to the global economy, but over which they have little (if any) control. In order to help conceptualise these global-local links I now intend to critically explore the large volume of work on commodity chains that has emerged over the last fifteen years in order to identify its insights as well as its shortcomings.

²³ 'Souvenirs are 'mementos of places and occasions', associated with a travel experience and linked to a 'generalised image of a culture' (Hitchcock, 2000: 1-2).

2.5 Conceptualising Commodity Chains

2.5.1 Introduction

The ‘commodity chain’ literature²⁴ is extensive and comprises a number of discrete strands, some stretching back more than 30 years. ‘Commodity chains’ in their basic sense depict a series of relationships (or ‘networks’) linking the production and consumption of specific goods or services. The physical movement of goods (or flow of services) is assumed to be embedded in specific practices or organisational and institutional structures which help to determine the relative benefits to ‘chain’ participants. These structures will in turn serve to add meaning to and shape the flow of commodities (Hartwick, 1998; Leslie and Reimer, 1999). It is important to remember, however, that the ‘chain’ metaphor, while providing analytical focus – with its notion of a clear and ordered series of links – ultimately represents an artificial construction, rather than a set of ‘naturally occurring’ relationships in the ‘real economy’.

Global commodity chain/global value chain (GCC/GVC) analysis first emerged in the early 1990s and has subsequently been built around a proliferation of empirical case studies. However, analytical tensions have grown in recent years and the approach now appears to be reaching something of a theoretical impasse (see Fine 2002; Bernstein and Campling, 2006; Gibbons et al, 2008). I would therefore argue that in the search for a more coherent theoretical underpinning to help conceptualise the research problem and to locate the study analytically Fine’s ‘Systems of Provision’ (sops) approach offers a more useful unifying framework (Fine and Leopold, 1993; Fine, 2002). Anchored in Marxist political economy, the sops approach provides a means of capturing the unique, historically-contingent and commodity-specific nature of the livelihood opportunities facing the Makonde woodcarvers of northern Mozambique and the social relations that surround their carving activities. In this way, carver livelihoods can be located within a global chain of activities, but in a way that moves beyond ‘a mechanistic description of

²⁴ ‘The term ‘commodity chain’ is used here simply as a (theoretically-neutral) short-hand collective term to encompass approaches with an analytical focus on the sequences of activities that link production and consumption of commodities (Hartwick, 1998 and Leslie & Reimer, 1999 use it in the same way).

nodes, links and connections' (Scoones, 2009: 19) and towards a more integrated and unified approach.

2.5.2 Evolving issues in the 'commodity chain' literature

It is not my intention here to provide a detailed chronology of the evolution of the 'commodity chain' literature, which is available elsewhere (see Bair, 2005, for instance), but some reference to the origins and development of the 'commodity chain' approach seems essential, before moving on to a critical review of its theoretical and methodological contributions. Three distinct 'strands' in the literature can be identified. Firstly, the Global Commodity Chain (GCC)/Global Value Chain (GVC) approaches (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994); secondly, the Francophone 'connection' (the *filière* tradition and Convention Theory) (Raikes et al, 2000; Ponte and Gibbon, 2005), and; thirdly, the 'Systems of Provision' (sops) approach (Fine & Leopold, 1993; Fine, 2002)²⁵. More recently there has been the emergence of what can be considered a hybrid 'strand', involving the practical application of value chain analysis (VCA) to development problems, including the feasibility of using the insights from VCA to analyse and foster 'pro-poor' growth and poverty reduction (see, for example, Mitchell et al, 2009).

According to Bair (2005), the first use of the term 'commodity chain' can be traced to a 1977 article by Hopkins and Wallerstein which was part of an early statement of the World Systems Theory (WST) approach. However, the intellectual roots of the 'commodity chain' approach can also be recognised in the structuralist development economics of the 1950s & 1960s (Cramer, 1999), in dependency theory (Gibbon, 2001) of the 1970s (which had clear links with the WST approach), and in a more practical sense, in the *filière* tradition developed by French researchers in the 1960s and 1970s (Raikes et al, 2000). Later work by Girvan (1987), in the dependency tradition, on a range of primary commodities (including bananas and bauxite) provided a early articulation of the distribution of value and value-added along the chain of activities from

²⁵ Leslie and Reimer (1999) include 'commodity circuits' as a additional strand in the 'commodity chain' literature, but this has a different internal logic and approach and I therefore reserve treatment of this for Section 7, later in this chapter, as part of a broader discussion of culture and commodification.

raw material extraction to retailing, placing control of the chain (and surplus extraction) firmly in the hands of dominant multinational corporations. Similarly, in WST, capitalism as a historical social system is characterised by widespread commodification; in this formulation a 'commodity chain' is conceived of as an 'international network of labour and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity' (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1986: 159). The material transformation of commodities from raw material to final good is assumed to require a particular international division of labour which gives rise to a stratified and hierarchical world system.

The emergence of Global Commodity Chain (GCC) analysis as 'a relatively coherent paradigm' (Raikes et al, 2000) is dated from the mid-1990s (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz, 1994). The original focus in GCCs was on industrial commodity chains with a particular concern with how industries were organised; this reflected the international extension of manufacturing activities outside of the boundaries of transnational corporations and nation states that had accelerated in the 1980s as part of broader processes of globalisation. Bair (2005) notes a disjuncture between the 'holistic', 'macro' and historical perspective of the original WST-inspired 'commodity chain' approach and the 'micro' (firm level), 'meso' (sector level) and contemporary foci which formed the basis of the GCC framework. The *filière* approach in its beginnings had a different area of application (local or regional agricultural commodity chains in post-colonial Africa and Asia), but was methodologically close to the GCC approach (with its mapping of the stages of commodity transformation and sale). Neither the GCC nor the *filière* approaches in their early formulations, however, could be considered 'theories', but were rather frameworks or analytical tools (Raikes et al, 2000). While, for many, the 'chain' metaphor has provided a manageable way of visualising often complex and abstract global relationships around specific 'tangible' entities (commodities, goods or services), one of its inherent weaknesses has always been its inability to generalise these relationships across products, time or space.

A common definition of a 'commodity chain' (Kaplinsky, 2000; Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001) is that it describes a range of activities needed to bring a product (or service) from

conception, through intermediate stages of production (or transformation) to delivery to final consumers and (possibly) on to final disposal after use. According to Kaplinsky (2000), the *global* in GCC terminology designates chains which involve a range of activities (and different economic agents) at different stages in a variety of countries, but also requires a degree of functional integration. For almost all participants in the 'chain' there will be both forward (downstream) and backward (upstream) linkages of some form. The premise of GCC was that of trans-national production systems integrated across geographical space, coordinated through a variety of market and non-market forms. Chains which are essentially regional in scope have still been considered legitimate foci of investigation – if they are configured by global 'dynamics' – which will almost inevitably be the case.

Four dimensions or parameters of Global Commodity Chains (GCCs) were identified by Gereffi (1994; 1999). The first two of these, *input-output structure* and *geographical coverage*, both helped to determine how a particular chain was configured. The next dimension, *governance structure* (or what was 'driving' each chain), included barriers to entry and chain coordination as part of the analytical framework²⁶. Finally, the *institutional framework* surrounding the chain (an aspect added by Gereffi in 1999), which helped delineate the conditions (mainly under the control of key agents) determining access to, and benefits from participating in any chain, including the scope for 'upgrading'. The implication was that participation in any GCC was a necessary, but far from sufficient condition for subordinate agents (individual small-scale producers, for instance) to upgrade or move up any chain hierarchy (Raikes et al, 2000). Of these 'dimensions', it was governance structure that attracted the greatest attention from GCC researchers, but also ultimately proved the most theoretically intractable. I expand on this aspect, below.

The change in terminology to Global *Value* Chains (GVCs), conventionally dated to 2001/2002, was presented as a 'tactical decision' by key theorists in order to avoid

²⁶ Gereffi (1994) defined governance as the authority and power relationships that determine how financial, material and human resources are allocated and flow within a chain.

problems with the GCC vocabulary²⁷. There were two broad justifications put forward for this: firstly, it was intended to reflect a change of emphasis towards ‘value creation’ and ‘value capture’ across chain activities, and; secondly, it was thought to more accurately reflect the focus of the various empirical case studies that had been undertaken. It was also seen as an attempt to distance the analysis from the limiting connotations of ‘commodity’²⁸. At about this time greater emphasis began to be placed on developing a more detailed typology of categories of upgrading (Humphrey and Schmitz, 2001). The move to GVC was accompanied by the development of a more formal theory of value-chain or sector-specific governance, but based as before around industrial upgrading around lead firms. Here governance was through *coordination*, which for Gereffi et al (2005) is primarily determined by the relationship between ‘lead firms’ and their ‘first-tier’ supplier(s).

A newer theoretical direction has been the view of governance as *normalisation*, or models of practice or collective rules which underpin chain coordination and how quality is valued at different points in the ‘chain’ (based on mutually-agreed quality conventions), a concept borrowed from convention theory (Eymard-Duvénay, 1989; Thèvenot, 2001). This has been used by GVC theorists to help contextualise buyer-seller relationships and collective systems in particular chains and for developing dimensions of product quality (against countervailing tendencies towards commodification). Here, Daviron and Ponte’s (2005) analysis of coffee and Gibbon and Ponte’s (2005) empirical studies of a range of African export commodities are prime examples. These developments have taken GVC analysis further away from its WST origins and towards a narrower firm-centred conceptualisation of ‘chain’ governance—with a lead firm at a particular node determining the overall form of governance or coordination and, indirectly, the scope for upgrading (Gibbon et al 2008).

²⁷ Bair (2005) suggests that this move reflects the growing influence of the international business literature on the analysis of global production networks, compared to the more sociological orientation of the GCC framework.

²⁸ According to Kaplinsky (1998) the problem with the phrase GCC is that the concept of a commodity does not refer to the product itself, but the markets in which it is produced and sold. Thus the same product may be a commodity in some cases, but not in others (this point is made by Keane, 2008).

A countervailing strand which chronologically parallels the development of the 'commodity chain' literature (although with very different intellectual roots, in radical political economy) has been the 'Systems of Provision' (sops) approach. This can simultaneously be viewed as a reaction to the evolving GCC/GVC 'agenda' and to the treatment given to consumption in neo-classical economics. It is an analytical construct developed initially (Fine and Leopold, 1993) as the basis of a new approach to the political economy of consumption, but coming later to have broader applicability. The starting point in the 'Systems of Provision' (sops) approach is Fine's (1993; 2002) view that all pre-existing approaches to analysing the 'chain' of commodity production and consumption had suffered from being essentially static and over-generalised and 'globally' focused, that is they were unable to handle changing circumstances and showed, at best, limited distinctiveness in their treatment of different commodities. These 'horizontal' approaches, which apply one single explanatory factor across all goods and all societies, are consequently invalid; the distinctiveness of each commodity 'is sacrificed in a futile quest for analytical simplicity, which makes it impossible to explain meaningfully what is consumed and why' (Saad-Filho, 1999). The alternative is to adopt a 'vertical' approach, but one that recognises that at each 'node' or link in the chain 'horizontal' influences (the occurrence of particular social relations or environmental conditions, for instance) will be important. For Fine 'each commodity or commodity group is best understood in terms of a unity of economic and social processes which vary significantly from one commodity to another, each creating and reflecting upon...its own 'system of provision'" (2002: 22). This includes different (but interdependent and flexibly linked) processes of production, product development, distribution, consumption and disposal, each link in this chain of activities playing 'a potentially significant role in the social construction of the commodity both in the material and *cultural* aspects' (op. cit.: 98, emphasis added). There is also recognition in the sops approach of the crucial role of time (historical contingency), space (sites of production, consumption etc) and gender in the structure and dynamics of any commodity 'chain'. The sops approach is necessarily interdisciplinary and has resonance with work focused on the 'geographies of consumption' (Hartwick, 1998) and

the 'social construction of space' underpinning chain 'dynamics' (Leslie and Reimer, 1999).

The relevance of Fine's critique (2002; 2004) for the 'emerging research agenda' identified for the GCC/GVC approach is clear. Bair (2005) claims that the GCC/GVC literature has made important contributions to the analysis of 'commodity chains' in three areas: (i) *methodologically* (through the mapping of complex production networks which help provide a 'grounded' way to study the local-global nexus); (ii) *theoretically* (by detailing possible types of governance, the underlying rationale for these and their implications); and, (iii) in *policy* terms (through identifying the scope for upgrading and possible strategies to achieve this, by setting out the need for accountability and possible ways to approach it, and the costs and benefits of fair trade interventions). The ordering of these contributions – with methodology privileged over theory – is telling. It is apparent that, in the problematic search for a coherent theoretical underpinning, GCC/GCC approaches have been forced to embrace 'analytical eclecticism' (Fine, 2002: 120) as the way forward for research, or as a 'methodological approach that can be mobilised within various theoretical perspectives' (Gibbons et al 2008: 315).

2.6 (Global) Value Chains: methodology, theory, policy & practice

2.6.1 Methodology: horizontal or vertical analyses?

Global value chains (GVCs) do not have a 'tangible reality', but offer a framework for trying to discover 'how the world works' (Mitchell et al, 2009), which according to adherents of the approach is useful for 'posing particular types of question' (Gilbert, 2008). In other words, there may be no intrinsic vertical 'logic' to individual chains. The focus in the GVC approach on individual commodities or product classes may also cause problems in terms of determining the boundaries of the analysis or dealing with the 'leakiness' between individual chains. Finally, it is possible that even the relatively 'unsophisticated' GVCs identified for primary commodities, like coffee or cocoa (Daviron and Ponte, 2005; Gilbert, 2008), may have multiple strands in terms of structure and governance, and multiple 'dynamics'.

While also adopting a 'vertical' analysis for the sops approach, Fine (1993; 2002) justifies this in order to uncover the unique causal mechanisms that run through each sop from production to consumption, and to counter the largely descriptive accounts that have pervaded the GCC/GVC literature. Fine (2002: 99) points out, however, that the vertical approach 'does not refute the presence and importance of horizontal factors that may be common to more than one sop' and that these 'horizontal' factors (like capital, labour and class relations of production) will certainly have analytical legitimacy and even primacy in the context of capitalism. That is, where these social and economic relations and structures are shared across different commodities, they are liable to play a different role in each sop or 'should be seen as tendencies whose strength varies between one commodity and another' (op. cit.: 33). While generally supportive of the sops approach Leslie and Reimer (1999) warn, however, that the reification and fixing of connections in a unidirectional 'chain' for any commodity should be avoided and that interconnected flows of materials, knowledges and discourses should also be recognised. Hartwick (1999: 426) meanwhile (acknowledging the Marxist geography tradition) advances a 'simple model of commodity movement' through which she makes a strong case for exploring the 'horizontal dimension of local relationships' at various nodal points in the chain. This appears to have resonance with the sops and has helped to inform this study. The question arises, however, - how much attention should be given to products and how much to sites?

2.6.2 Theory: governance and power

'Chains' may be tightly knit and integrated or loosely coordinated and fragmented, with relationships between participants governed by more dominant firms at different points along the chain (Kanji and Barrientos, 2002), either individually or collectively. From empirical study, two 'ideal-typical' forms of governance were originally identified – producer-driven commodity chains (PDCC) and buyer-driven commodity chains (BDCC)²⁹. While producer-driven chains and buyer-driven chains were thought to

²⁹ PDCCs were seen as characteristic of more capital-intensive industries (eg aircraft and automobiles), where technology and scale economies acted as barriers to entry at the manufacturing stage. BDCCs

dominate manufactured good production and exchange, international-trader-driven chains were seen (following later research) to characterise the markets for ‘traditional’ primary commodities (like tea and cotton) (see Gereffi, 1999; Gibbon, 2001). The ‘governance’ typology was further extended to include internet-driven chains (Gereffi, 2001) and technology-driven chains (O’Riain, 2004), while some chains have been characterised as having a ‘bi-polar’ governance structure³⁰. For the purpose of the current research a recent additional categorisation – the ‘entrepreneur-dominated’ chain – could appear useful; Te Velde et al (2006) and Marshall et al (2006), for instance, identify a number of examples of non-timber forest products where this arrangement has emerged. This is an example of a captive value chain form of governance (Gereffi et al, 2005); here, small suppliers rely upon much larger buyers for their transactions and experience substantial switching costs. Although these ‘entrepreneurs’ (eg local buyers of craft products) help create market opportunities, ensure the coherence of value chains and generate quality improvements, they also maintain control over market access and what is sold.

For Humphrey and Schmitz (2001) ‘governance’ refers more widely to the relationships and institutions through which non-market coordination of activities in the chain is achieved, which could include the role of ‘external’ parties or parameters (NGOs, certification bodies, quality standards, fair trade schemes, etc). More recently, as has been seen, approaches to ‘governance’ in GVC analysis have either been more narrowly focused down on ‘lead’ firm *coordination* of the chain or have taken a broader view based on the *normalisation* (or adoption of) given practices or mutual expectations of behaviour by agents in the chain. Both approaches have been framed in the context of industrial and institutional economics, with the latter drawing heavily on Convention Theory.

were characteristic of apparel (sub-contracting networks, managed by designers and retailers who controlled brand names and marketing) and agricultural products (sold by large buying supermarkets).

³⁰ Fold (2002) suggests cocoa traders/grinders and brand-name chocolate manufacturers control different segments of the cocoa GCC/GVC. Kanji et al (in Carr, 2004), based on a study of production and trade in Mozambican cashew nuts identifies both a ‘trader-driven’ chain (linking smallholders with exporters) and a ‘buyer-driven’ chain (running from Indian processors to Northern retailers).

The GCC/GVC 'ideal-typical' 'governance' types can be criticised for being too deterministic, offering a series of templates to which (all) commodities were expected to comply. 'Inevitably, empirical evidence has contradicted extant ideal-types...that have necessarily been forced to increase in variety' (Fine 2004: 338). Analytically, it is an organised framework for empirical typology (Fine, 2002)³¹. Raikes et al (2000) raise questions related to the potential existence of more than one 'driver' in any chain at any time and possible changes in key agency (and therefore 'ideal-type') in any chain over time (see Gilbert, 2008, for a discussion of changing governance in the coffee and cocoa chains). Various empirical studies (in the early 2000s) seemed to indicate that a buyer-driven dynamic was emerging in most PDCCs, as out-sourcing of manufacturing activities increased (Gibbon et al, 2008). Raikes et al (2000) discuss, more generally, the problem of circularity that is inherent in the way that 'governance' is defined; the profits obtained by key agents are explained by the power they hold in the chain, but power itself is defined in terms of high profits. Fine (1993: 43-44) is strongly critical of the general GCC/GVC approach because it is tautological³², scientifically unsound and not grounded in a broader analysis of the structures and social relations of global capitalism. Significantly, the new theory of governance (as *coordination*) in the literature has been criticised (even) by GVC theorists because its much narrower scope has undermined the benefits of formulating economic relations as (global) 'chains' of activities (Gibbons et al, 2008). The relative neglect of 'external' factors (social, environmental and regulatory influences, for example) has also been noted, as has the absence of any rigorous statement on the scope, prevalence and duration of any (quality) conventions and their objectivity (a point noted by Daviron and Ponte, 2005).

³¹ 'In short, the GCC approach is a partial and simpler version of the sop approach. It painfully slowly evolves by recognising the limitations imposed by its initial model of buyer- and producer-driven chains' (Fine, 2002: 121).

³² Fine (2002) suggests that attempts to defend the validity of the GCC/GVC approach border upon the tautological because 'the applicability of the approach is limited to the instances of its empirical incidence' (120).

2.6.3 Policy: upgrading and adding value

Humphrey and Schmitz (2001; 2004) developed a four-fold typology of upgrading methods in Global Value Chains, where upgrading is broadly defined as organisational learning at the level of the individual firm or enterprise. All forms of upgrading generally require increased access to (sometimes proprietary) information, or technology, or both. For Daviron and Ponte (2005), the significance of the GVC approach is that it allows for the identification of (i) the 'place' where specific quality attributes are produced and, (ii) how value is distributed between different actors. They look in particular, in their study of the coffee industry, at the ability of producers to create and control the value embedded in various quality attributes. More generally, primary commodity producers, however, may find that their upgrading options are much more limited (Gibbon, 2001) and are likely to emerge in three areas: gaining higher margins on unprocessed exports through quality improvements, increased reliability of supply or new forms of contract; new forms of unprocessed raw materials, or; localising commodity processing.

The form of chain 'governance' – how access to the chain is mediated and how the chain is coordinated - appears crucial to understanding how the opportunities for upgrading might come about (Keane, 2008). However, the evidence from a range of empirical studies is at best ambivalent, at least in part because it has proved difficult to operationalise the conceptual apparatus offered by the GVC approach. Many have shown that upgrading may be difficult, largely due to rising barriers to entry as firms attempt to move up the 'chain', and the outcome may actually be greater polarisation between 'nodes' or participants. 'Dominant' firms which are able to upgrade can acquire higher economic rents, often at the expense of other firms. In this sense, upgrading can often become a process of exclusion³³ as well as inclusion, particularly for developing country suppliers (Gibbon, 2001). Indeed, for some producers (for instance African export firms tied into buyer-driven chains) an argument has been made (Gibbon and Ponte, 2005) that a more pragmatic response may be some form of 'trading down',

³³ In the Kenyan horticulture sector many smallholders, unable to meet the required production standards, were marginalised or excluded from the upgrading process as a result (Dolan et al ,1999, noted by Keane, 2008).

taking advantage of their resource endowments and comparative advantage in the global division of labour.

2.6.4 Identifying 'value' in GVCs

Despite its designation, Global Value Chain analysis has paid surprisingly little attention to questions of 'value'. There are two components to this. Firstly, how and by what processes is value created? And, secondly, how and by what processes is this value distributed?³⁴ The distribution of value (where this is defined as shares of final retail price, or retail-value added) has been addressed in a range of studies on specific (primary) commodities, most notably with respect to coffee (for instance, Talbot, 1997; Daviron and Ponte, 2005) and horticulture (Dolan and Humphrey, 2000). The methodology behind this has been set out in guides for practical value chain research (see Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001; McCormick and Schmitz, 2001). However, Gilbert (2008) believes that '(d)espite the claims of its proponents, GVC analysis is *not useful* in explaining value shares' (6, emphasis added). This is partly because the 'chains' themselves represent a simplification or artificial reification of reality, where tracing the physical progress of a commodity (in Gilbert's case, coffee and cocoa) neglects processes that take place elsewhere (eg price formation in overseas terminal markets). In terms of methodology, Keane (2008) and Gibbon et al (2008) raise concerns about the use of shares of final retail-price or of retail value-added as proxies for the division of value-added (which generally indicate rising shares as the commodity moves downstream). These measures ignore relative costs, including possible economies of scale that might arise at each node, as well as the variability of retailer margins (or indeed profits). Gilbert (op.cit.) is also critical of what he calls the 'cake division fallacy' or the 'zero-sum' assumption (where gains to one participant in a chain are at the expense of the gains to another) in this approach to value distribution. Nevertheless, the evidence generally shows (Gibbon, 2001; Mitchell et al, 2009) that shares accruing to poor, developing country participants in GVCs are likely to be asymmetric, due to

³⁴ Gereffi (1994) explains the distribution of 'wealth'/profits as a product of the relative intensity of competition and innovation at different 'nodes' in any chain; the degree of competition will depend both on barriers to entry and the extent of scale economies available at any node.

existing patterns of specialisation and the structure of international trading relationships. For Keane (2008: 11) this suggests reorienting the focus of GVC research onto those activities (skills development and other forms of 'learning-by-doing') that are directly 'adding value in the domestic context' in developing countries.

2.6.5 The Development 'turn' in GVC analysis

In recent years, the (global) value chain (GVC) approach, or a particular variant of it known as 'value chain analysis' (VCA), has been viewed as a practical tool to identify how poor people 'can engage, or improve their terms of engagement with, domestic, regional or international trade' (Mitchell et al, 2009: iv). However, in the process it has tended to become over-stylised and oversimplified. The focus has tended to be on identifying how the 'poor' can upgrade (or 'trade up'), either by improving their position in existing value chains or by accessing new ones. There is recognition, however, that the 'traditional' upgrading categories put forward by Humphrey and Schmitz (2001; 2004) and others – which mirror the upgrading sequence followed by the East Asian NICs – need to be modified if they are to capture the more limited opportunities available to the poorest and most marginalised groups. Mitchell et al (2009) propose two additional upgrading 'categories' - horizontal and vertical coordination - to be added to the original four, both of which represent necessary steps for gaining access to viable value chains. The first, horizontal coordination, is 'the process of intra-nodal organisation' (generally at production or processing nodes) in some form of collective structure (like a producer group). Setting up clusters of small enterprises (or producer cooperatives) may help where there is a highly-fragmented production structure. It will serve to increase bargaining power and offer potential economies of scale, and is seen as a way of facilitating market access, scaling-up and sustainability³⁵. The second, vertical coordination, involves a move away from arms-length, spot transactions towards market relationships based on contracts (eg between small farmers and processors).

³⁵ This is illustrated by the experience of small enterprises in rattan and bamboo weaving sector in Vietnam (see Kanji et al, 2005).

Practical experience³⁶ has also pointed to the crucial need for an appropriate 'enabling environment' for upgrading involving a set of 'external' governance structures (eg legal support, functioning institutions, services etc), while the participation of other stakeholders (eg civil society, fair trade organisations) is also recognised.

The recent development 'turn' in GCC/GVC, with its focus on possible gains to the 'poor' from participation in international trading networks, is to be welcomed. However, the analytical (and practical) focus is very much on to the potential for upgrading by developing country enterprises or other 'stakeholders', rather than raising questions about 'national economies' and 'issues of development' (Bernstein and Campling, 2006: 260). To some extent it nevertheless provides a valuable counterweight to orthodox trade theory and policy (Kanji and Barrientos, 2002; Mitchell et al, 2009), but value chain approaches remain essentially narrow conceptions which are very broadly applied. Even in a development 'context', GCC/GVC approaches retain a relative neglect of the material and environmental conditions at the production end of the 'chain' (social relations, reproduction of workers), as well as a lack of engagement with the political economy of consumption (Hartwick, 1998). In practical terms, there is a need to consider more thoroughly not just upgrading, but insecurity and returns to employment (casual, seasonal, family and migrant labour), home-working and smallholders. It has also been argued that there has been inadequate attention given to the role of gendered and poor workers as chain participants in terms of both the distribution and creation of value (Carr, 2004). For agricultural primary commodities, a tendency in GVC analysis to underemphasise interactions with other crops, particularly subsistence crops, is a fundamental problem (Samper, 2003, in Gilbert 2008). More profoundly, to be legitimately 'pro-poor', closer attention in GVC analysis would need to be paid to addressing structural relations of inequality, exploitation and exclusion and the broader historic and economic processes through which individuals, households or groups are marginalised or excluded from access to (global) 'value' chains (or 'adversely incorporated' in them) in the first place. This has underpinned the approach adopted

³⁶ See, for instance the ODI/COPLA case studies on agricultural commodities and rural community-based tourism (Mitchell et al, 2009a) and on NTFPs (Marshall et al 2006) in Latin America.

thus far in the research and is a crucial concern of the 'Systems of Provision' (sops) approach, to which I now return.

2.7 The 'Systems of Provision' approach: commodity, cultural value and meaning

2.7.1 Makonde woodcarving as a 'system of provision'

In contrast to the broad typologies employed by GCC/GVC analysis, the sops approach emphasises the *particular* production, distribution and consumption conditions of a given commodity, without neglecting the systemic processes that surround it. In this chapter I have therefore emphasised the particularity of Makonde blackwood (*mpingo*) carvings produced in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. These carvings have been/are materially produced and have had their cultural significance determined within a unique, vertical chain of activities (to use Fine's framework). Secondly, the sops approach recognises that a given 'chain', far from being static, is dynamic in both in form and operation. The concern has therefore been with documenting changes over time in practices and discourses through which the flow of this particular commodity has been shaped; that is, in specifying the 'historical contingency' of the chain. This lay behind the earlier exploration of the historical evolution of Makonde woodcarving within a more general review of African arts and crafts. Thirdly, each sop should be considered to be 'geographically contingent'; that is, 'place' and context matter. Each 'node' (production, distribution, consumption etc), linked through the movement of the commodity, has unique 'horizontal' dimensions which define it. Production 'dimensions' (or conditions of production), for instance, include social relations (class, gender etc), household reproduction and the natural environment (use of land and resources). For Hartwick (1998), following Peet (1991), 'place' means local nature (or environment) bound into the material and semiotic conditions of production and consumption, which is often masked by commodity exchange. Makonde blackwood woodcarving exhibits specificity in terms of location of production (and consumption) and is environmentally-contingent, based on locally available raw material.

Finally, and fundamentally, the sops approach directs attention to the need for an understanding of the nature of commodities (and commodity exchange) and how commodities are valued (Fine, 2002). In this respect, there is a need to consider whether ‘cultural’ commodities or ‘cultural products’ – like woodcarvings and arts and crafts more generally - are in some sense different from other more conventional commodities, particularly in terms of the relationship between their material or physical content, the ‘meanings’ ascribed to them and, ultimately, whether they offer the potential at least for producers to capture more of their value.

2.7.2 Commodities, commodity exchange and the notion of value

Earlier (in Section 2.4), I discussed the concept of ‘authenticity’ in terms of both methods of facture and the subject matter of woodcarvings, linking it to issues of commercialisation and commodification. In order to elaborate further I now intend to explore more deeply the particular characteristics of commodity production and exchange.

In classical political economy the nature of the commodity (in theoretical and practical terms) is defined by two basic attributes (Fine, 2002: 80) – use value and exchange value³⁷. The ‘value in use’ of a commodity represents its ability to satisfy human wants, while its ‘value in exchange’ is essentially the quantity of goods (or other commodities) the commodity would exchange for if traded. In other words, any product has a ‘use value’ and if traded as a commodity, it will additionally have an ‘exchange value’ – most often expressed as a money price. A further dichotomy arises in the process of purchase and sale of a commodity; from the point of its ‘market transaction’, the ‘life of the commodity’ can be traced in two directions- either forward to the buyer (and an act of consumption) or backward through the seller to the commodity’s origins in production (Hartwick, 1998). As Fine and Leopold (1993: 28) point out, ‘(t)he commodity as a use

³⁷ The distinction originated with Adam Smith (1776) and underpinned the labour theories of value developed by both Ricardo and Marx. They are linked, in neo-classical economics, in the concept of marginal utility, which is considered to be the determinant of the commodity’s price, equating to its value; in Marxist economics the concept of value is embodied in the socially-necessary labour time involved in the commodity’s production (Fine, 2002; Lapavistas, 2002).

value bound for consumption and as an exchange value deriving from capitalist production necessarily exhibits a potential diversity of development'. Thus, any analysis of commodity transactions would not be complete if it focused only on exchange value, to the exclusion of use value (or, indeed, vice versa). For commodity exchange to occur between participants there must be use value 'in the product of the other (which could include monetary exchange)' (Lapavistas, 2002: 10). For the seller the commodity has no immediately realisable use value, but he or she must aim to embed sufficient intrinsic use value in the commodity in *expectation* of exchange. For the buyer, use value must be linked to planned use after purchase – whether in consumption or further production. Custom-made commodities (like many of the larger-scale carvings commissioned by local buyers in Cabo Delgado) reinforce this conceptualisation; here, use value is to some extent determined in advance by the buyer, offsetting the need for the seller to implicitly forecast it (and thus theoretically allowing the blackwood sculptor to judge the amount of time and effort to apply in production).

The use value of a product is inherent in its intrinsic characteristics and those which enable it to satisfy a human need or want. However, there is a difference between individual and *social* use value; the latter emerges where there is a generally accepted use value for others in society. The use value coincides with the physical existence of a commodity but it only becomes reality through 'consumption', ie it is realised only in the process of consumption. Focusing on the use value of a commodity, however, says nothing about the social relations of capitalism surrounding its creation - 'division of labour, autonomous competing producers (and a) working class detached from the means of production' (Lapavistas, 2002: 16).

To become a commodity a product must be transferred to (or traded with) another (for whom it will provide use value) by means of an exchange. There are certain technical, social and political pre-conditions necessary for commodification. Firstly, the good or service (or artefact) needs to be tradable, secondly, a transfer of ownership has to take place and thirdly, for this to occur, a real market demand for the good or service is required (ultimately generating a 'realised' price when the transaction, or sale/purchase,

is completed)³⁸. Thus, while subsistence food crops provide 'use value' for the household producing them, these crops do not generate 'social use value' as they are not traded (ie ownership is not transferred to others). In this sense they do not constitute 'commodities'³⁹. This can be illustrated with reference to so-called 'traditional' figurative carvings or masks (produced and used originally in ceremonial or social occasions, like initiation rites). Although these will have had a 'social use value' derived from their broader social (or communicative) function, in their original context they would not be considered to be commodities because the process of 'consumption' did not involve a 'transfer' of ownership, nor were the carvings produced to meet a particular market 'demand'. These 'traditional' carvings do, however, meet the criteria for being cultural 'products' (combining creativity, symbolic meaning and 'authenticity') and are increasingly becoming commodified despite social and cultural controls aimed at preventing this. In this respect, the work of Saetersdal (1998) is instructive. In his study of Makonde carving in Tanzania he focused on the way that the symbolic meaning of wooden carvings (masks) had changed depending on the context in which they were used, despite the 'material expression' (the object) remaining the same⁴⁰. Saetersdal (1998) reported that (at the time of his field research in the early 1990s) carvers working in Boko, just outside Dar es Salaam, would produce versions of these masks to sell as curios to tourists ('in full view of everyone'), while producing very similar masks in secret for ritual purposes. In villages in southern Tanzania (around Mtwara) on the other hand, these masks at the time were not produced for sale and carvers were 'shocked' to hear that they had been. However, even there, social change and economic imperative have

³⁸ There also has to be, we would argue, a degree of homogeneity necessary before a good or service can acquire 'full' commodity status.

³⁹ Although they are 'outside the market' they will nevertheless have a 'potential or hypothetical' price, based on equivalent commodity transactions.

⁴⁰ Mapiko (and other) masks used in ritual activities are produced in secret outside the village, hidden from women and uninitiated boys, using a specially selected piece of wood and a specific sequence of production (see Kacimi & Sulger, 2004; Israel, 2005). Historically, these masks were often destroyed after use, but the sale of these items is now becoming increasingly widespread. During my own research, I was shown examples of mapiko masks on several occasions (most recently in a compound in Idovo village where carvers were happy to pose for a photograph wearing them). Interestingly, another carver (in Mizeze) had been commissioned by the local handicraft shop in Pemba (Arte Maconde Lda, see Chapter 5) to fabricate a 'copy' of a mapiko mask with a view to producing these for sale; despite its purely commercial 'focus' he insisted on showing it to me in secret in the yard behind his house (Field Notes, May, 2010).

since combined to draw these forms of carving, imbued with deep symbolic and cultural meaning, inexorably into the marketplace.

2.7.3 Culture, cultural products and cultural value

I would argue, based on the discussion thus far, that contemporary woodcarving has recognisable roots in pre-colonial Makonde culture and society, largely related to the production of ritual items and in this sense meets the conditions of ‘expressive’ authenticity (Dutton, 2003) set out earlier. The strong social and cultural ‘exclusivity’ of the Makonde and the intergenerational transmission of skills via kinship-based apprenticeships have preserved the cultural homogeneity of woodcarving. In this sense at least it can be regarded as a form of ‘cultural practice’, which embodies shared cultural values. However, the evidence presented also challenges the idea of Makonde woodcarving as a ‘traditional’ cultural pastime locked into a timeless past. It has variously acted as a vehicle for anti-colonial critique or resistance (West and Sharpes, 2002), as a way of asserting a collective ‘national’ consciousness (Alpers, 1983), as means for advancing the ‘agency’ of individual exponents/artists (Kingdon, 2005b), or, more fundamentally, as a source of livelihood.

The notion of ‘culture’ is undoubtedly a contested concept, open to wide variety of interpretations. In its broadest sense it can be considered to encompass a set of shared values, beliefs, stories, memories, traditions, customs, practices and aspirations (Throsby, 2001; Klammer, 2003) that distinguishes one group of people from another (be it a community, an organisation, an ethnic group, or indeed a nation). Culture constitutes socially-inherited patterns of behaviour or practices characteristic of a people, which may be manifested in particular cultural practices (Wembah-Rashid, 1998). Culture, in this sense, has an influence on individual and collective action and affects the way a group, or groups, behave. ‘Culture’ clearly matters more directly for individuals, households or communities because of the potential links between cultural ‘activities’ or ‘output’ (in the form of arts and crafts production) and income generation

and poverty reduction. In this way, culturally-based arts and crafts can potentially provide alternative livelihood opportunities for the poor.

Writers in the cultural economics sub-discipline (see Frey, 2000; Klammer, 2001; Throsby, 2001) have emphasised this second strand, related to the economics of cultural goods, goods which are considered to have some specific and unique attributes. Their starting point is to explore whether a separate class of 'cultural' product exists which can be logically differentiated from other goods or commodities and, if so, what the implications of this are. Throsby (2001; 2003) proposes the following three criteria as a starting point, but recognises that more context-specific definitions may be necessary. The three criteria or characteristics expected of 'cultural products' are: firstly, that they embody some element of *creativity* (or originality) in their production; secondly, that they are concerned with the generation and communication of *symbolic meaning* (or multiple meanings), and; thirdly, that cultural products embody (at least in principle) some form of *intellectual property* in their production (which might be linked by some to the notion of 'authenticity'). The presence of these three characteristics or attributes (which I would argue are embodied to a greater or lesser extent within much contemporary Makonde sculpture) has implications, firstly, for the valuation of these products and, secondly, for their ability to resist the process of commodification.

Let me consider first the issue of cultural 'value'. According to Klammer (2001: 19), a cultural good is a good that has cultural values; that is, it is considered as a symbol of something (a community, a tradition, a cultural episode) and so has attracted a meaning (and an associated 'value') which extends 'beyond its usefulness', it may have special artistic or aesthetic qualities, or it may be inspirational in some way. He argues that people (sellers, buyers and intermediaries) *treat* cultural goods differently and thus their location in a system of exchange may be problematic. It also means that cultural goods can often go some way towards avoiding the tendency towards commodification (or the 'commodity phase') that assails many other goods and services. Cultural goods embody or manifest cultural values; a carving is both a tangible entity, but also serves to represent (intangible) rituals, shared histories or traditions, and the particular context (in

terms of both place and social relations) in which a good is placed also influences its valuation. There are thus likely to be major contradictions involved in valuation processes for cultural products (like art or crafts). This is inevitably the case where, for instance, there are wide differences between the inherited Western aesthetic of the buyer (and the attendant meanings he/she places on the work) and that of the artist (which might include ideas of ceremonial or sacred meaning)⁴¹.

In contrast to economic value, Klammer (2003: 46) describes cultural values as those values⁴² that evoke a quality that goes beyond the economic or social and implies that for cultural goods there is a 'value beyond price' (Smith, 1988), the so-called 'double-discourse' on value. The previous discussion suggests that there are two components to this, both problematic to translate into practice. Firstly, the need to determine the nature of the value a *community* places upon the traditions symbolised in its art or craftwork. And, secondly, at the level of the *individual* artist/craftsperson, how to value what Ruskin (quoted by Throsby, 2001: 22) called the 'life enhancing labour of the worker who made the commodity', including the creativity that is embedded in or intrinsic to a work of art and which makes it unique and gives it value. This is close to Marx's formulation of the labour theory of value, within which the quantity of embodied 'concrete' labour (the time, place and skill of workers) determines the use-value of the commodity⁴³. It also suggests (in contrast to the marginalism of neo-classical economics), that value is inescapably a socially-constructed phenomenon; the determination of value and therefore prices 'cannot be separated from the social context in which these processes occur' (Throsby, 2001: 22), or how they are framed historically. The issue of multiple and partially socially-determined valuations is reflected in the 'performative bargaining' that inevitably takes place between seller and buyer of art or craft products and is an aspect that featured frequently in the open discussions with the Makonde woodcarving groups (see Chapter 7). In the final section of this

⁴¹ For an example of this see the discussion on Aboriginal art in Willis and Fry (2002), for instance.

⁴² Throsby (2001: 28-29) lists the key 'cultural value characteristics' as being Aesthetic, Spiritual, Social, Historical, Symbolic, Authenticity.

⁴³ There is in addition an 'abstract' labour component, which is 'general, featureless and homogenous' and provides the substance of a commodity's value. It is socially and historically specific and established through market competition (Lapavistas, 2002).

chapter I take this discussion further by looking more closely at the potential divergence between the meaning ascribed to a commodity and its material content. This divergence arises as an inevitable result of capitalist production and exchange, and serves to dislocate the commodity – here a Makonde blackwood carving - from the unique historical, social and cultural context in which it has been fabricated.

2.7.4 Commodity Fetishism: material content and meaning

The dislocation between a commodity's material content or physical properties and its meaning (or how it is perceived throughout its 'system of provision') can be explored using the notion of 'commodity fetishism'. Commodity fetishism relates to the disguising of the social relations under which commodities are produced within the system of capitalist production⁴⁴. With their entry into the marketplace commodities are effectively emptied of meaning to be replaced by imaginary social relations or 'mythologies', which are historically-contingent, but which are also subject to change. Commodity fetishism also acts to mask the 'place' of manufacture, or the society-nature relations involved in production (Hartwick, 1998).

The links between a commodity's meaning (as a purchased object of consumption) and its material content are complex and varied, inevitably more so for a 'cultural product', like a hand-fashioned wooden sculpture, often imbued with deep cultural significance. The 'material culture' perspective (Appadurai, 1986; Kopytoff, 1986) is centred on the premise that it is only when goods enter the phase of exchange, that they become commodities, rather than it being inherent in the properties of the objects themselves (and embodied in their 'use value'). A particular focus for Appadurai (1986) is the relationship between producers and consumers – the point of exchange – and how this might be conditioned by the distance between them. The greater the distance, the greater the scope for differences in meaning (or 'mythological misunderstandings' of

⁴⁴ More precisely, as Fine (2002: 67) points out, 'Marx's theory of commodity fetishism makes the criticism that exchange relations are presented purely as relations between use values...whereas they also embody (and conceal) the underlying determinants associated with the exploitative relations between producers'.

social, cultural or historical circumstances surrounding production, for instance) and perceptions of 'authenticity' to arise.

Fine (2002) advances two main criticisms of the 'material culture' perspectives. Firstly, in contrast to that of the 'systems of provision' approach, these perspectives seem partial, 'unidirectional' and one-sided, rather than universal and dialectical. Within a sop, as well as a 'linear' economic transformation, there is a constantly changing relationship between the symbolic meanings of goods and their physical content (which operates in both directions), with 'commodity fetishism/aesthetic illusion' operating throughout the commodity's entire life cycle. Indeed, as a 'commodity moves through its sop, so it picks up and transforms culture along the way' (op.cit: 106). Secondly, there is the broader problem (from a political economy point of view) of the enforced separation of the sphere of the 'cultural' from that of the 'economic', which seems to be a particular concern when cultural goods are under consideration (as commercialisation can fundamentally change the nature of these products). Within a sop, 'structures, tendencies, relations and reproduction are recognisably imperative to the provision of commodities for consumption *and* to their cultural attributes...they are the consequences of capital and capitalism' (Fine, 2002: 117). In other words, a unique cultural 'system' is attached to each 'system of provision'; the same processes that produce the material properties of the commodity also contribute to its cultural content.

Freidberg (2003: 29) posits that commodities may face a 'double fetishism' where the deliberate disguise of social relations of production may be accompanied by the 'commodisation of knowledge' about the good itself, which for African arts and crafts is embodied in Western aesthetic conventions of artistic 'worth'. The latter might include repetition of received or superficial knowledge emphasising the ethnic, exotic or cultural provenance of commodities, which will tend to obscure 'the social relations and exploitative practices of production'. The role of information in revealing production sites (or 'place') and countering the anonymity and marginalisation of producers that follows from 'commodity fetishism' and revealing knowledge of the market to producers is crucial in helping to solve what Daviron and Ponte (2005) term the 'commodity

problem'⁴⁵. The nature of the woodcarving 'chain' and the potential at least for direct interaction between sculptor and buyer might suggest that it is relatively straightforward for producers to embed meaning or 'symbolic content'. It should also mean that it is easy for consumers to understand what this content is and how to value it. However, as I suggested during the earlier discussion of 'authenticity' (Section 4, this chapter) the 'meaning(s)' attached to a work of art, craft or other cultural product are likely to be highly contested, open to a wide variety of interpretations and often mediated or controlled by intermediaries as well as by aesthetic 'conventions'. Moreover, the scope for the woodcarvers to 'upgrade' and add value to their work in the marketplace is likewise extremely limited. The concern is that the growth of the tourist market has tended to accelerate processes of standardisation and commodification which have been underway since initial colonial contact.

⁴⁵ The 'commodity problem' facing producers is that they are prevented from gaining their fair share of the returns or value due to the structure and operation of commodity markets (Daviron and Ponte, 2005: 220).

Chapter 3: Framing Carver Livelihoods

3.1 Introduction

At the core of this research is a concern with Makonde woodcarver livelihoods and how they have been shaped by historical contingency, social relations and cultural ‘tradition’. The objective is to explore how far woodcarving (and the distinctive social networks within which it is embedded) has led to livelihood diversification, accumulation and household reproduction or has simply provided a precarious means for survival within colonial and post-colonial Mozambique. Here my analysis runs counter to the dominant paradigm of development discourse (embodied in policy terms by the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework) and its particular conceptualisation of ‘livelihoods’, which I discuss at length in this chapter. Thus, although the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) has offered some practical guidance for framing my research approach (see Chapter 5), I am acutely conscious of its limitations in terms of *explaining* contemporary carver livelihoods in Cabo Delgado.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the place of natural resources in livelihood diversification, with particular reference to the role and importance of woodcarving as a livelihood activity. The empirical literature on woodcarving as ‘handicraft’ is rather scant and also somewhat narrowly focused, both geographically and theoretically. Much of it is couched (uncritically) in the language and conceptual apparatus of the SLF. It consequently suffers from the same emphasis on household assets and individual agency and from a similar relative neglect of the history and social relations within which woodcarving evolved and now operates. The final part of this chapter considers the impact the SLF has had on changing the way poverty is perceived and measured in development policy and in defining the terms under which growth and development interventions might be considered ‘pro-poor’. While this has helped shift the debate away from narrow money-metric poverty measures towards a wider set of indicators (with practical application in my research), other shortcomings (of reductionism, lack of context-specificity etc) inevitably remain. From the point of view of the woodcarvers (and handicraft producers more generally) it is the tourist market (and the ‘tourist value

chain') that appears to many to offer the greatest potential for raising incomes, improving livelihoods and reducing poverty. As I contend in Chapter 4, evidence on the 'pro-poor' impact of tourism in Mozambique has, however, proven elusive.

3.2 Natural Resources and Livelihood Diversification

The poor in developing countries are heavily dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, but often have a low level of rights over and access to these resources and are particularly exposed to a high level of ecological vulnerability and economic insecurity as a result. Diversification of livelihoods – across activities and sectors, geographically, within households and over time – represents a response to problems of uncertainty, risk and vulnerability and, indeed, poverty. In the literature on sustainable livelihoods that emerged from the late 1990s onwards poverty and poverty reduction became more broadly conceptualised through work on livelihood sustainability (see Carney, 1998; Scoones, 1998; Ellis, 2000, for instance) focusing on ideas of household vulnerability, coping strategies and diversification. Short-term coping strategies (involuntary responses to climatic and/or economic shocks) became differentiated from medium-term adaptation (or risk management), which stressed diversification (or access to multiple income sources) of some kind (Ellis, 1998; 2000; Devereux, op.cit.).

Rural livelihood diversification 'describes the phenomenon by which peasant households take up non-farm activities, or rely on non-farm income transfers, for the overall standard of living they are able to achieve' (Ellis, 2006). Livelihood diversification or 'de-agrarianisation' (Bryceson, 2002) has been viewed in the literature as either a deliberate household strategy or as an unplanned response to crisis. It could conceivably tend to increase (rural) inequality (by facilitating accumulation by the rural rich) or to reduce it (Reardon et al, 2000). Ellis (2000), summarising the conclusions of various studies produced in the late 1990s, reported that 30-50 per cent of rural household income in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, and up to 80-90 per cent in parts

of Southern Africa, was derived from non-farm sources⁴⁶. Household reliance on non-farm incomes is relatively less important in rural Mozambique than in neighbouring countries (Norfolk, 2004), but there are marked regional variations reflecting different historical circumstances and contemporary conditions (O'Laughlin, 2002). Furthermore, following periods of instability or stagnation the scope for diversification shrinks. In Mozambique in the late 1990s, after the disruption caused by war on rural markets and purchasing power, some rural communities reported that non-farm earnings accounted for less than 10 per cent of household incomes (de Sousa, 1999). This may also be the case when returning migrants from urban areas or from abroad add to the household burden without at least matching increases in output or incomes (Francis, 2000).

Barrett et al (2001) report that while overall rural household income per capita is positively associated with the share coming from non-farm sources, the form of this diversification often differs between poorer and better-off households, with the latter more likely to pursue business activities (trade, retailing etc) and the former casual wage work. This suggests that non-agricultural income diversification in sub-Saharan Africa, while it may support the livelihoods of all rural households, is also likely to reinforce differentiation and class stratification (Bryceson, 2002; Rigg, 2006). This point is made more strongly by Bernstein (2006: 403-404), who states that diversification of livelihood sources, pursued in 'increasingly precarious conditions' is 'inextricably bound up with class and other forms of social differentiation in complex and intricate ways', and that tendencies of both 'diversification' and differentiation are increasing.

The use of natural resources in rural livelihood strategies is clearly not restricted to agriculture and the (full-time) cultivation of land, but supports a number of non-farm activities (Reardon, 1997; Ellis, 1999; Baumann, 2002; Bryceson, 2002; Norfolk, 2004). A range of other (mainly forest-based) natural resources 'are collected, processed and/or marketed by many families, either as a predominant activity or as part of a diversified portfolio of livelihood strategies designed to spread and minimise specific

⁴⁶ See Reardon (1997) and Bryceson (2002), for example.

risks' (Norfolk, 2004: 6)⁴⁷. Mozambique is particularly rich in forest resources (DNTEF, 2007), with the *miombo* forest type covering vast areas in central and Northern provinces. Compared to most other African countries, a larger proportion of the rural population in Mozambique live in isolated settlements widely dispersed throughout the country's forests, making them more heavily dependent on forest resources (as a source of woody biomass for cooking, in particular) for their survival (Norfolk, 2004).

Forest products are usually divided into two categories: timber and non-timber forest products (NTFP). Depending on the particular definition used, wood for carving (and, of greater general significance, fuel wood) can fall into either category⁴⁸. In terms of forest products, NTFPs have been the main focus in livelihoods discussions since the mid-1990s for several reasons. Firstly, because they have a high level of actual use by the rural poor, who appear to be disproportionately dependent on forest products (especially fuel wood and fodder), with some studies suggesting that these contribute up to 40% of household incomes in forest areas (Belcher, 2005). Secondly, many are treated as 'open-access' resources, are widely available and their harvesting has a low environmental impact. Thirdly, they can be processed relatively cheaply and easily or may not need processing, and some can be sold for cash. However, the benefits from individual NTFPs in terms of (potential) contribution to household livelihoods and their commercialisation prospects vary greatly and may have been overestimated in many cases (Angelsen and Wunder, 2003). With low market value, many NTFPs can be considered 'inferior goods' (Arnold, 2002) and poor communities may have few other options than to gather or harvest them. Timber and other industrial forest products, on the other hand, while offering a high income potential, have tended to be inaccessible to the rural poor, certainly on any large scale, because of substantial (cost and technical) barriers to entry. Access is also restricted because the poor are unable to secure long-term and defensible legal rights over commercial forests which have been claimed by

⁴⁷ In rural Mozambique, depending on location, these might include bush meat, honey, clay, roots and tubers, medicinal plants, building materials, thatching grass, firewood and the production of charcoal and salt (Norfolk, 2004: 6-7). To these we would include woodcarving and handicraft production, recognised as significant livelihood activities in Cabo Delgado.

⁴⁸ The timber category usually includes sawn wood, pulp, panel boards and other industrial uses; NTFP covers everything else from roots and fruits, through to a range of medicinal plants, bamboos, rattans and other palms used for weaving (Belcher, 2003).

the state and 'sold' to large companies, sometimes in a less than transparent manner, who themselves then act in unsustainable ways (Belcher, 2005). While perhaps unintended, national forestry policy in Mozambique appears to have had a negative impact on the livelihoods of the poor in Cabo Delgado in recent years (Sun et al 2008), a theme I return to in Chapter 4.

Sustainable livelihood approaches, more generally, had a similar focus on rural livelihoods, but were later increasingly applied in urban areas (Moser, 1998). However, it is important not to overstate the distinction between rural and urban contexts and it may indeed be misleading in the context of poverty analysis. Many urban households are also (indirectly) reliant on forest-based natural resources for their livelihoods, to some extent, as the basis of production (of carvings or handicrafts) and/or trading activities, as well as through temporary migration. Beall (2004), in her wide ranging investigation into urban poverty, writes about the strength of linkages between urban and rural populations in African cities and how these play a crucial role in family survival as households have diversified their livelihood activities across the rural-urban divide. There is a need to retain a more flexible view of the household, looking beyond simple residents/residence to include the contribution to household welfare of those individuals who may be temporarily or spatially separate from it. Furthermore, diversification in the countryside which has increased the importance of the rural non-farm economy has also deepened rural-urban interactions. A more appropriate view may therefore be of 'a continuum between rural and urban areas that recognises the economic, social and cultural links between them and the complex ways in which household livelihoods straddle both the rural and the urban' (Twyman and Slater, 2005: 4). This might be thought of as 'spatial diversification', or what Slater (2002) talked of as the 'stretching' of livelihoods across spatial barriers.

The study of livelihoods must combine a concern for the present with a concern for the dynamics of livelihood change both looking backwards into the past and forward to the future. For instance the notion of 'sustainability' of livelihoods relies on some form of balance or equilibrium between ecology and human agency which has not been

satisfactorily addressed in the SLF literature or in development interventions implicitly based on the framework. Firstly, there is a need to understand the complex nature of traditional livelihood systems and the role of natural resources within these. Secondly, there is the need appreciate how individuals and households adapt their livelihoods to changing eco-systems (land, water, forest, pasture etc) and evolving economic, social and political conditions (Baumgartner and Hogger, 2004). In a broader sense, the neglect of an historical perspective in the SLF has meant a failure to recognize that contemporary livelihoods and class relations are not the chance outcome of previous (individual) decisions but follow from broad historical processes which give rise to conflict, proletarianisation and differentiation (O’Laughlin, 2002). It was therefore considered essential, in investigating (carver) livelihoods to aim at relating ‘empirical micro-level data to structural, institutional and historical elements of the macro-context and (in this way)...to capture the processes of differentiation, accumulation and impoverishment that occur over lifetimes’ (Toner, 2003, based on Murray, 2002). Conceptualising the woodcarving ‘chain’ as a ‘system of provision’ (Fine & Leopold, 1993; Fine, 2002) which builds on the ‘material circumstances’ and ‘cultural significance’ surrounding woodcarver livelihoods is part of this process.

3.3 Woodcarving as Livelihood Activity

Although woodcarving (and art and craft production more generally) is an important element in the life of the rural and urban poor in many parts of Africa (and worldwide)⁴⁹, surprisingly little has been written until recently on its contribution to their livelihoods in any systematic way. Where it has been covered, woodcarving has been considered as one of a wide range of forest-products, rather than as an activity with its own unique

⁴⁹ The Kenyan woodcarving industry is the largest of its kind in Africa, generating an estimated US\$20 million in annual export revenues in the late 1990s (Choge et al, 2005), but this is only about a fifth of that of Balinese export earnings (Rohadi et al, 2005). Survey evidence from the mid-1990s suggested between 60,000 to 80,000 active carvers in Kenya, supporting over 400,000 dependents. Judging the size of the woodcarving industry in other East and Southern African countries is made even more difficult by the more dispersed (village-based) nature of much of the production. Sources suggest that woodcarving production in South Africa and Zimbabwe was worth between US\$1-2 million per year on average in the late 1990s (Standa-Gunda & Braedt, 2005; and Shackleton, 2005; respectively); we would put the value of woodcarving sales in Mozambique in the late 1990s at upwards of US\$4 million (UNESCO, 1999).

political economy. As discussed in Chapter 2, the main body of work on woodcarving and crafting has come from art history and anthropology traditions, with relatively fewer studies emanating from the broader social sciences.

An important recent strand in the literature, arguably closer in focus to that of the current study (at least in practical terms), has been the emergence, over the last ten years or so, of a number of donor-funded case studies on the link between woodcarving and handicrafts, and livelihoods, from around the world. Two of the most important have been the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) studies on the international woodcarving trade (Cunningham et al, 2005) and closely-related work undertaken on NTFPs by the United Nations Environmental Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) published as Marshall et al (2006). The latter was sponsored by DFID's Forest Research Programme and drew on case studies from Mexico and Bolivia⁵⁰. Interestingly, in the context of the earlier discussion, whilst in the CIFOR studies '(w)oodcarving fits, sometimes uneasily into the general category of NTFPs' (Belcher and Achdiawan, 2005), the UNEP-WCMC's ten representative NTFP case studies do not include a single wood-based example. The UNEP-WCMC case studies are nevertheless valuable in many respects. The research methodology adopted integrates qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, which has helped inform my own approach to data collection. They are directly poverty-focused and look at issues of access to and sustainability of natural resources, and on the value chains that surround particular NTFP activities. However, they are not accompanied by a rigorous critical treatment of the sustainable livelihoods approach that explicitly underpins them, nor do they explore the wider social relations in which these activities are embedded. Closely linked to the UNEP-WCMC studies has been the growing body of empirical work on rural handicraft production and trade in Southern Africa, including several studies which use micro-surveys to assess its impact on

⁵⁰ Other policy-based research has focused on the promotion of small and medium forest enterprises (SMFEs) as a basis for promoting poverty reduction and resource conservation through sustainable forest management and processing of timber and NTFPs. (See Donovan et al, 2006, CATIE Policy Brief).

livelihoods and poverty alleviation⁵¹. However these again adopt, uncritically for the most part, the narrowly empirically and mechanistic approaches embodied in the SLF, lacking history and lacking structural context.

Cunningham et al (2005) (published under the title 'Carving Out a Future') focus on a set of eight cases dealing with commercial woodcarving (two each from Mexico and Indonesia, together with four from sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe⁵²), which formed part of a broader five-year project involving a comparative analysis of 61 NTFP cases⁵³. The woodcarving case studies were intended to be illustrative of the heterogeneous nature of the sector in terms of scale, historical evolution, raw material source (natural forest or plantation), final product (functional craft items or high-value art), main market (domestic, tourist and/or export), but also together demonstrate shared concerns relating to resource scarcity, variable market demand and low incomes.

I intend to draw on several of these individual case studies at various points in this research to help support or amplify my insights, but will conclude here with some general comments on the unique characteristics of woodcarving vis à vis other forest-based products. Firstly, it might be noted that when looking at livelihoods, woodcarving differs from other NTFPs because its focus is more heavily on the artists/crafters themselves and the value added by their skills and abilities, rather than on raw material production (although substitutability of species is possible in carving). Secondly, the bulky nature of wood as a raw material has implications for the location of production, but its durability means that it can be easily stored and traded over long distances.

⁵¹ See Terry (1999; 2001) for a detailed review of the importance of handicraft industry in Botswana, for instance. The use of 'micro-surveys' in the empirical analysis of craft-based production and livelihoods in southern Africa has been growing. Pereira et al (2006), for example, examine the contribution of local trade in reed-based crafts to crafter livelihoods in the two villages in the Transkei, South Africa, based on structured interviews with 40 crafters. See also Makhado and Kepe (2006), who survey 52 crafters in the same province. De Vletter's (2001) study of Xirundu basket makers in Inhambane Province in Mozambique was based on semi-structured interviews with 27 artisans across three villages.

⁵² The book included a Chapter written by Zachary Kingdon looking at Sculpture and Identity, based on his research with the Makonde woodcarvers in Tanzania, but this did not offer sufficient quantitative data to be included as one of the comparative cases.

⁵³ The smallest case study covered 60 carvers in Sukabumi, Indonesia, the largest almost 2,500 carvers in Kenya.

Thirdly, that because wood can be harvested at any time in the year, there can be greater flexibility when carving takes place. And, finally, that woodcarving (on average) has a relatively higher dependence on tourist and export markets compared to domestic sales, than other NTFPs. These characteristics all emerged unambiguously in the course of my empirical research (see Chapters 6 and 7).

While interesting in showing the diversity of carver experiences in different geographical settings, the CIFOR case studies have not been approached in an analytically coherent or consistent way, nor have they used the particular livelihood experiences they document to illuminate general processes underlying levels and patterns of poverty. These, like other examples of mainstream thinking about natural resources and poverty alleviation that has underpinned development research and policy over the last fifteen years have been couched in the language and concepts of the SLF/SLA. For its many proponents this has appeared to offer a new way of thinking about poverty which was focused on 'strengthening people's command of assets, expanding their opportunities to pursue different livelihoods strategies, and enhancing resilience in the face of risk, stresses and shocks' (Ellis and Allison, 2004: 4). How far has it done this?

3.4 The Evolution of the (Sustainable) Livelihoods Framework as Idea and Policy

Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches (SLA) and the (sustainable) livelihoods 'framework' (SLF) first entered development discourse in the early 1990s, partly as a result of the rethinking of natural resource-environment-poverty linkages and specifically the imperative for diversification. The 'livelihoods' approach to understanding poverty and poverty reduction has thus been central to mainstream development thought and policy for over 15 years, but in both theory and application has now reached something of an impasse. The deeper ideological and theoretical shortcomings of the SLF have long been recognised⁵⁴ and these are now becoming more widely acknowledged, even by

⁵⁴ O'Laughlin (2004) has famously criticised livelihoods frameworks as being good methods in search of a theory.

some of its earliest proponents (see, for instance, Scoones, 2009). I would argue that this is partly because of the flexibility of the term 'livelihood(s)' itself, whose meaning can appear elusive and open to a wide variety of interpretations (a classic development 'buzzword', see Cornwall, 2007)⁵⁵. In a narrow sense it can be used to refer to an individual's or a household's portfolio of income-generating activities. In its broader usage in development discourse a livelihood is commonly deemed to denote 'the rich complexity of economic and non-economic factors...observed as being important to people' (Clark and Carney, 2008: 5). The widely cited definition advanced by Chambers and Conway (1992: 7) is that a livelihood 'comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living'.

The methodological context within which the SLF emerged was undoubtedly important. Although the first systematic statement of the sustainable livelihood framework is conventionally dated back to the work of Chambers and others in the early 1990s (Chambers and Conway, 1992), micro-oriented, cross-disciplinary antecedents can be traced back much further than this (see Solesbury, 2003; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005; Scoones, 2009). Both the village studies of the 1970s and household studies of the 1980s, and indeed Sen's work on entitlements (Sen, 1981), shared a common emphasis on the 'local' and the micro-level behaviour of the poor. These studies were often far from optimistic, however, showing that household responses to and outcomes from common structural conditions could prove to be very different, with poor households in many cases 'increasingly excluded from the benefits of economic growth and thus marginalised' (de Haan and Zoomers, op cit.: 29). The writers contrast this 'pessimism' (which was also present in the broader structuralist and dependency perspectives of the 1970s and 1980s) with the relative optimism of the sustainable livelihoods approaches that developed later, which reflected a changing policy environment.

⁵⁵ Partly due also to it being a 'boundary' term (Scoones, 2009), building consensus across disciplines, but inevitably reduced to the 'lowest common denominator' of usage.

Arce (2003: 202) argues that the ideas on which sustainable livelihoods approaches were formulated reflected and were part of a broader political realignment in the 1980s which promoted the withdrawal of the state and favoured 'the promotion of a neo-liberal discourse based on individual values' and individual agency. In the SLF, people are assumed to construct their livelihoods (or build their livelihood *strategies*) by drawing on a range of assets and entitlements (Carney, 1998; Scoones, 1998). For Niehof (2004), 'livelihood' is a multi-faceted concept, consisting both of what people do and what they accomplish by doing it, referring to outcomes as well as activities. In other words, livelihood approaches seemed to (at least) offer the possibility of conceptually linking together *inputs* (variously termed assets or capitals) with *outputs* (livelihood strategies) and finally *outcomes* (poverty reduction and improved well-being etc), the latter accommodating new insights into the definition and measurement of poverty which were emerging almost simultaneously⁵⁶. In this respect, the SLF meshed with the focus in development practice during the 1980s and 1990s on project-driven Logical Framework Analysis, with its linear, instrumentalist approach (Dar and Cooke, 2008; Sumner and Tribe, 2008).

The translation into the policy arena came in 1997 with adoption by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) of 'sustainable rural livelihoods' as a core focus of its 'poverty-focused' development interventions. According to Scoones (2009) a 'broad community of practice' (and a wide variety of emphases) drawn from the world of academia and NGOs was rapidly subsumed into a definitive 'Framework' (with an 'asset pentagon' comprising five 'capitals') by DFID in 1998⁵⁷, a move that he now thinks misjudged. However, at the time (Scoones, 1998) the key issue seemed to be about getting institutional and organisational settings (state, NGOs and private sector) 'right' rather than problems with formulation of the structure itself. DFID's embrace of

⁵⁶ The emphasis on assets and poverty reduction was mirrored in the focus of the New Poverty Agenda in the early-1990s, with its stress on the promotion of economic opportunities for the poor, investment in human capital and the provision of safety nets to protect livelihoods (see Lipton & Maxwell 1992, for instance).

⁵⁷ Clark and Carney (2008: 1) suggest, however, that even as DFID began putting considerable effort behind developing and applying the sustainable livelihoods approach, the move was controversial and there was 'resistance from within DFID' to the concept.

SLF approaches proved to be surprisingly brief, however, and by 2002 it was no longer actively promoting the approach. Clark and Carney (2008: 3) posit that this was due to the SLF's inadequate attention to institutions (how to link policies together at different levels), technical difficulties of implementing 'non-sectoral' programmes and that (in contrast to competing rights-based approaches) it was 'inadequately focused on the underlying causes of poverty'. There was also recognition, as Rigg (2007: 32) suggests that as an approach to livelihoods the SLF was 'too mechanistic, too instrumentalist and too narrowly drawn'. Indeed, for Scoones (2009) current problems with the livelihoods approach have arisen from the over-dominance of 'a simplistic application of synthetic frameworks' in the form of 'checklists' when moving from livelihoods theory to policy interventions, coupled with a relative absence of political analysis, rather than from fundamental issues with the concept itself. A more radical 'outsider' view (and one to which I would adhere) is that the SLF should only be viewed as a useful analytical framework – albeit one that views livelihoods rather one-dimensionally and largely in material terms - and nothing more.

3.5 Livelihoods Approaches: a critical juncture?

In the light of these theoretical and practical shortcomings with the SLA I consider here some key areas of concern. Firstly, the particular focus on assets (or 'capitals') which can be mobilised to secure livelihoods, the role of social networks and linked to this, the implicit assumption of individual agency that underpins the idea of livelihood 'strategies'. Secondly, the broad issue of 'access' and the need to understand livelihoods in relational and dynamic terms, and; finally, the very limited consideration given to the interface between the local and the 'global' in SLA (which the analysis in Chapter 2 revealed as crucial to understanding contemporary carver livelihoods). The discussion that follows forms part of a broad critique which is intended to offer useful conceptual reference points for this research study.

3.5.1 Assets and Capitals

For many livelihoods researchers (drawing directly on Chambers and Conway, op.cit.), a focus on household *assets* (or usable resources) remains the centrepiece of the analysis as does an emphasis on individual (or household) agency, with the stated aim of ‘placing people at the centre of development’. In Ellis’ (2000) conceptualisation, a livelihood is made up of *assets* (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital) and *activities* (eg farming, wage labour etc), but in contrast to earlier exponents he recognises that the issue of *access* to these (determined by both social relations and institutions) is likely to be important. More broadly, he stresses that institutions (eg access to common property resources and land tenure) and social relations, as well as economic opportunities (or the lack of them), help shape individual and household livelihoods. Similarly, Bebbington (1999), drawing on contemporary debates around rural development in Latin America, constructed a framework for analysing rural livelihoods, diversification and poverty reduction based on access to and use of five (slightly different) types of ‘capital’ asset (produced, human, natural, social and cultural capital). He viewed these in turn as resources (a means through which individual agents make a living, or build their livelihoods), as assets that give people ‘capability’ and as outputs that make livelihoods meaningful and viable. Like Ellis, Bebbington (op.cit.) makes the case that it is *access* to resources that is likely to prove most crucial for livelihoods, but neither gives this the analytical attention it deserves.

In the sustainable livelihoods framework it is the ownership of, or access to, assets (or ‘capitals’, including social capital) which can be put to productive use (through asset accumulation), that supposedly creates the capability of the poor to ‘pull themselves out of poverty’. According to Clark & Carney (2008: 5) the SLF provides a useful analytical or heuristic tool for modelling the dynamics of the trajectory out of ‘social protection’ to ... more viable livelihoods, even for those with few assets’. However, as some critics suggest, the framework becomes unusable unless assets can be directly compared particularly, as Toner (2003) points out, measuring and defining even single assets is problematic and produces a tendency towards reductionism. There are also problems with the SLF’s apparent narrow focus on the pursuit of economic objectives, achieved

through the trade-off of various capitals, where capitals are seen as synonymous with household 'assets', thus distorting the original meaning of capital as social relation⁵⁸. This conceptualisation reduces assets to 'neo-classical economic concepts' and tends to 'capitalise' every aspect of people's lives (Beall, 2002; Whitehead, 2002).

3.5.2 Social Capital and Social Networks

Access to resources, of course, is mediated by social relations and characterised as much by exclusion as by inclusion – the so-called 'dark side' of social capital (Putzel, 1997). As one of the fiercest critics of the 'social capitalist' framework, Fine (1999; 2002) has subjected the notion of social capital (and the methodology of inductive empiricism its supporters have utilised) to an extended and devastating critique, attacking the concept of social capital for being chaotic, too broad, too abstract, and for its a-historical approach. He concludes that the correct course of action should be to reject social capital as a theoretical construct altogether, rather than to seek to utilise and adapt it to serve a more progressive agenda. What is missing from the analysis is a political economy based on class and power, viewing social capital as 'a social relation, rather than as a non-physical, atomised resource' (Fine, 1999: 13)⁵⁹. For Bebbington (2007: 156), social capital is seen as both defining a social network and delineating the resources controlled within that network which may be 'open and potentially beneficial to its members, while being relatively closed and potentially prejudicial to the interests of non-members'.

Meagher (2005: 219) is critical of this 'essentialising logic' which she believes has led to a conceptualisation of social networks as either representing a form of 'social capital' (and thus promoting 'economic efficiency and accumulation') or as 'social liabilities' (because, for instance, they are too culturally 'embedded') if they do not. Context is crucial; in reality, communities (in Africa and elsewhere) are not socially-homogeneous

⁵⁸ Scoones (2009) now (rather disingenuously) admits that the use of the 'capitals' metaphor was 'an unfortunate diversion' from the 'richer insights' developed elsewhere on sustainable livelihoods.

⁵⁹ See Bebbington (2004) for a lengthy response to Fine and others. A later article (Bebbington, 2007), explores whether Bourdieu's (1986) conceptualisation of social capital – grounded in political economy – offers a better route to salvaging it in policy terms.

and households (and individuals within households) are differentiated not only in terms of the 'assets' they hold but also in terms of the opportunities that are open to them (McCormick, 1999). The richness and diversity of the social networks within which African artisans are located (emerging from a variety of historical and cultural circumstances) requires a much more nuanced, institutionally-sensitive perspective. In Chapter 2 I described how Makonde woodcarving (like craft-making more generally) is implanted within a particular network of social relations, built around a 'founding community' with unique cultural origins at the centre of skills development and occupational organisation. However, as Meagher (2005; 2010) observes, the presence of networks of this kind has not necessarily led to the development of interwoven 'strategic social links' leading to accumulation and economic advancement. Instead, these networks are often characterised by a relatively unstructured (or 'anti-structural') multiplicity of ties mobilised to support individual or household welfare concerns and giving rise to the 'distinct economic logic of networks of survival characterised by affective obligations and redistributive claims' (Meagher, 2010: 133). This focus on the specificity of the particular social networks within which livelihood 'choices' are embedded has tended to be neglected in the sustainable livelihood framework which has instead focused on individual 'agency-oriented' strategic behaviour.

3.5.3 Individual and Collective Agency

This 'agency-oriented' perspective implicitly assumes that individuals have considerable control in decision-making terms and are instrumental in shaping their lives. How realistic, however, is this particular rationality assumption in the livelihoods framework, particularly when rational choice theory (and its 'methodological individualism') is itself problematic in terms of both its assumptions and predictions? There is a need to recognize that in terms of livelihoods much individual (or household) behaviour cannot generally be described as 'strategic' (ie what the poor are able to do for themselves), but is built on unintentional action. 'Rationality' however appears to be intrinsically context-specific - economically, socially and indeed environmentally (Sen, 1987).

Furthermore, within sustainable livelihood approaches, individual decision-makers are also presumed to be 'representative' of a larger group; thus, once 'typical' behaviour has been established it is considered feasible to aggregate this up to household, group or village level. In other words, it is assumed (by the rational choice approach that underpins the SLA) that social phenomena can be explained in terms of the individual actions of which they are composed. This is tantamount to an idealisation of self-help extended from the individual to the collective level (Fine and Milonakis, 2009). The achievement of social agency thus requires the assumption of some form of institutional decision-making apparatus through which individual decisions are aggregated and policy agreed, but rational choice theory cannot explain *why* individuals join various kinds of groups and associations. For the latter, self-interest can only translate into altruistic behaviour if reciprocity and trust particularly over chains of actions, are recognised by individuals⁶⁰. Thus, 'social structures' are simply chains of interconnected individual actions or the *unintended consequences* of these. For rational choice theorists, all social action, it is argued, can be seen as rationally motivated, as instrumental action, however much it may appear to be irrational or non-rational (Scott, 2000).

Bourdieu (1991; 2000) viewed rational choice theory as grounded in a misunderstanding of how social agents operate. Social agents do not generally act based on explicit rational, economic criteria, but rather operate according to an implicit practical logic. (Individual) strategy may be observed to follow in part from conscious calculation, but also arises from unconscious dispositions – based on group or class *habitus*⁶¹. 'While each agent's *habitus* has a certain biographical dimension, it is also heavily structured by where it falls within wider relationships and structures of social difference: class, gender, ethnicity, and so on' (Bebbington, 2007: 156). Through this,

⁶⁰ Here ideas of 'social capital' are thought to help to provide the 'missing link'; for Putnam (1993), for instance, social capital relates to such things as 'trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (167).

⁶¹ The *habitus* of an individual (a set of assumptions, habits, taken-for-granted ideas and ways of being) is a product of his/her history and implies that he/she is able to follow 'rules' of behaviour without referring to them. In other words, the view that individuals have of the world and their actions tends to be framed by their past experience (Bourdieu, 2000). In this way, *habitus* becomes a way of reconciling (individual) agency with (social) structure.

practices are embedded, as are agents' ability to 'strategise'. Individual livelihood decisions are thus bounded by structural constraints and embedded in an available historical repertoire, with the 'so-called "rational" economic agent...the product of quite particular historical conditions' (Bourdieu, 2000: 18). These decisions may lead to differing outcomes *even with the same starting point* in terms of assets, household configuration or underlying social and economic conditions.

Marxist political economy takes this a step further. It is critical of the assumption of rational, strategizing individuals implicit in the livelihoods framework, and the way in which its advocates have presented issues of vulnerability, survival and equity in the language of methodological individualism inherent in neo-classical economics (Fine and Milonakis, 2009). In terms of action, 'the concept of class struggle, with its emphasis on collective agency...is replaced by concern for the affirmation of individual agency and identity, understood in terms of strategizing, preferences, priorities and choice' (O'Laughlin, 2002: 4). Marxism in contrast, offers a more powerful analytical approach to the question of agency, one that is specifically concerned with the problematic and contingent relations between individual and collective agency and between consciousness and action. The tensions between (limited) individual agency, broader social structures and historical contingency emerged strongly in the testimonies of the carvers encountered in this research. One way of reconciling these, in a practical sense, is to direct the focus away from livelihood 'strategies' and towards approaches looking at livelihoods in terms of 'pathways' or 'trajectories'.

3.5.4 Livelihood Pathways and Dynamics

De Haan and Zoomers (op. cit.) propose the use of the concept of *pathway* to depict livelihood patterns among particular social groups and *trajectories* as a means of conceptualizing how individual strategic behaviour is conditioned by historical circumstance and through social differentiation. They believe there is a link between individual behaviour (strategic choices) on the one hand and the livelihood 'styles' (shared experiences, response to policies, long-term group practices, institutions) within

which these are located. However, pathways are different from strategies. Rather than the pursuit of pre-set goals by individuals acting self-interestedly, decisions are made on the basis of a wide range of past experiences, with individuals coordinating actions with other actors (in line with Bourdieu's idea of *habitus*). Livelihood 'trajectories are then 'individual actors' life paths'.

The problem of inequality in access to resources and power, which is mediated by social relations, class, caste, kinship, institutions (or indeed cultural identity) is, as I have already intimated, an area not adequately addressed in sustainable livelihood approaches. Class, appears only as an 'institutional context variable', rather than 'relational concept' (O'Laughlin, 2004: 387). Carter & May (1998: 16) provide one of the few attempts to explore ideas of 'class' within the livelihoods framework. They attempt a disaggregation (based on shared 'endowment characteristics') of the South African rural population into eight discrete 'livelihood strategy classes' ranging from marginalized (agriculture reliant) groups to small entrepreneurs, where these 'classes' or strata have broadly similar relationships to property and the means of production. Their analysis based on 'shared livelihood strategies reveals that economic well-being differs systematically across livelihood classes'. However, Carter and May's 'classes', defined as groupings of individuals or households sharing a common ('livelihood-necessitated') pattern of behaviour, remains a very narrow conceptualization in which class appears as context, rather than as process. As O'Laughlin (2010: 13) succinctly states, '(c)lasses are not income groups – the rich and the poor and the in-between...(but) are defined by their relation to the means of production; as political collectives they are defined through histories of political action'.

3.5.5 Scaling Up?

Individual and household livelihoods have been configured by social and political relations, and both visible and hidden structures of power – both locally and globally – but there has been a failure in the livelihoods literature to look at flows and chains

across 'scales'⁶² that is, linking the 'local' to the 'global' (Scoones, 2009). As Rigg (2007: 38) points out, because the livelihoods approach has placed emphasis on the local there is a danger of it 'reifying community... (while) ignoring processes and structures of life which lie above the local'. Like the evolution of GVC analysis (see Chapter 2), the reaction has been incremental adjustment of mainstream livelihood approaches to accommodate 'missing' elements. For instance, there has been a belated recognition by proponents that the livelihoods framework has given insufficient attention to the institutional framework - market systems and market access (how markets operate, the availability of information, information asymmetry etc) - and its importance for poverty reduction (Kanji & Barrientos, 2002; Albu & Griffith, 2006; Dorward et al, 2009). This has prompted attempts to synthesise new so-called 'pro-poor' market approaches – most comprehensively developed in policy form in the 'Making Markets Work for the Poor' (or M4P) approach promoted by DFID and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) - with Sustainable Livelihoods approaches (see Albu, 2008; DFID, 2008)⁶³. However, it is also recognised (Dorward et al, 2009) that where markets are 'missing' or prone to 'failure' (due to power asymmetries, for instance) other forms of exchange or coordination between actors (including some form of managed exchange through hierarchies like NGOs, communal organisations or the state) may be required.

I would view the failure of the livelihoods framework to satisfactorily incorporate issues of 'scale' as an intrinsic theoretical failing of the approach itself. A proper analytical focus on the long-term structural processes that underpin contemporary livelihoods in post-colonial Africa, for instance, would make it clear that they are part of a system of generalised commodity production (making the 'micro'/'macro' distinction redundant). This includes both the internalisation of capitalist social relations in the organisation of economic activity and the location of economies within international divisions of labour, markets and circuits of capital and commodities. Globalisation has led to a

⁶² A partial exception is Kanji et al (2005) which sets out why and how livelihoods and value chain analyses should be combined to help understand market-based livelihoods, using four case studies from Mozambique (cashews), Vietnam (rattan and bamboo weaving), Bangladesh (shrimp farming) and Mali (horticulture).

⁶³ DFID (2008) sees markets as a crucial mediator between poor people's assets and livelihood and development outcomes. Within this broad approach, the M4P framework is situated alongside and within the livelihoods framework.

‘fragmentation of labour’, with the growing ‘classes of labour pursuing their reproduction in increasingly precarious conditions’ (Bernstein, 2006: 402-403)⁶⁴.

Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches can certainly be criticised for their preoccupation with the contemporary struggles of individuals and households to ‘make a living’, neglecting the broader sweep of history and the ways in which wider structural relations and changes cause livelihoods to evolve over time. However, even as the inadequacy of SLA in revealing the *causes* of poverty has been increasingly acknowledged, their role in helping to re-frame the way in which poverty is perceived and *measured* in development policy and practice has come under much less scrutiny. In the final part of this chapter I consider how far this re-framing has provided a better understanding of the meaning and consequences of poverty.

3.6 Livelihoods and Poverty: Meaning and Measurement

Despite their theoretical shortcomings, sustainable livelihoods approaches have been widely associated with the move away from traditional ‘money-metric’ measures towards a broader conceptualization of poverty within development discourse and policy, although there remains remarkably little consensus about the meaning of poverty and or consequently how it should be measured (Deaton, 2001; Ruggeri-Laderchi et al, 2003; Sumner, 2007). Individuals or households considered ‘poor’ using one measure may not be designated as such under another (the ‘identification’ problem).

The debate over the role and choice of poverty indicator(s) and the method by which data are gathered clearly also have important implications for research and policy. There is certainly an ‘absolutist’ core in terms of hunger and starvation, but also the recognition that broader and more flexible measures of inequality or relative poverty are needed. These might relate to the ‘capability poverty’ (Sen , 1983) facing individuals (in

⁶⁴ Bernstein (2006) uses ‘classes of labour’ in preference to ‘inherited notions of proletariat’ which like (the term) ‘peasant’ is ‘encumbered with too many problematic historical and ideological associations’ (406; fn 14). ‘Classes of labour’ represents those who depend directly or indirectly on the sale of their labour power to ensure their daily reproduction.

terms of powerlessness or lack of freedom to live the lives they choose) or 'social exclusion' which might affect specific groups, focusing on social processes that bring about such exclusion (Ruggeri-Laderchi et al, op.cit.). More commonly, however, poverty measures are likely be grouped into those which are 'economic' (monetary) indicators, 'non-economic' (non-monetary) indicators or those which combine elements of the two, in the form of composite, 'multi-dimensional' indices (Bourguignon and Chakravarty, 2003), with which the current impetus appears to lie. The most commonly applied 'money-metric' poverty indicator, based on income and expenditure deprivation, is the use of a per capita benchmark poverty line. Imputed values are calculated for subsistence production in terms of income in kind from own farm output to convert this into equivalent monetary values⁶⁵. However, there is widespread recognition (Sumner, 2007) that this measure is clearly insufficient and often unreliable and so needs to be supplemented by other poverty indicators, in particular those that measure deprivations in health, education, adequate shelter, access to safe water and other basic needs.

What are the links between livelihoods approaches and the conceptualization and measurement of poverty? Firstly, the emergence of the SLF was mirrored by a shift in emphasis away from income and consumption measures of poverty towards the search for approaches based around some form of poverty index combining the 'economic' and 'non-economic' (the UNDP's Human Development Index in 1990 and MDGs in 2000 are the most notable examples). These indices are not without problems, however, in terms of selection and weighting of indicators (inevitably influenced by the agenda of the initiator or investigator), and the likelihood that they may be highly correlated anyway. Further, although it is 'virtually undisputed' that poverty is multi-dimensional and beyond purely 'economic' dimensions' (using monetary measures based on income or expenditure for instance), these economic measures still predominate as key development indicators, even being accorded higher 'status' in the MDGs (Sumner, 2007: 4). This paradox is partly explained by the ease of measurement and perceived objectivity of 'economic' indicators, but must be more fundamentally due to their

⁶⁵ The \$1 per day line was introduced in the 1990 World Development Report; it refers to household expenditure per person and although heavily criticised is still used as a yardstick to compare poverty levels over time and across countries.

underlying *purpose* in determining the form and focus of development policy interventions.

Alkire and Foster (2011) distinguish between using multiple indicators to produce a ‘multidimensional view’ of poverty and their ‘Multidimensional Poverty Index’ (MDI), produced under the auspices of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). The MDI uses a particular methodology (or ‘a general framework’) for measuring multidimensional poverty – or for identifying who is ‘poor’. Ravallion (2011) has criticised the MDI on a number of counts – that use of the index is constrained by availability of household data of appropriate breadth and quality, that it bundles together ‘apples and oranges’ in terms of data without regard to their underlying theoretical relevance, that it embeds a number of unforeseen ‘trade-offs’ across dimensions (in terms of value equivalence) and finally that while it involves a great number of value-judgments in terms of scaling these are not made explicit⁶⁶. More fundamentally, there are grounds for questioning the use of a ‘general framework’ (like the MDI), which requires the use and manipulation of large amounts of data of questionable reliability. In its aim of trying to capture everything, the MDI may produce little of value and indeed may be a distraction from examining the structures that give rise to material inequality in the first place.

Measures of poverty should ideally be relational and dynamic, so as to be able to map individual, household and intra-household poverty ‘trajectories’, and permit the identification of measurable forms of discontinuity between the ‘poor’ and ‘non-poor’. Thus, it is important to study the livelihoods of the poor in relation to those who are better off in order both to help comprehend the varied trajectories they have faced and to explore how poverty reduction might best be achieved (Murray, 2002). The use of appropriately-focused ‘proxies’ in the form of household possessions or living conditions (or ‘asset’) indices appear to offer the means for judging both the relative poverty of households and tracking changes over the time. These should also, as far as possible,

⁶⁶ Needless to say Ravallion’s position at the World Bank is not irrelevant here and the ‘income-consumption’ indicators used by the World Bank share some of these problems of theoretical rigour and value-judgments (see Deaton, 2005 and Reddy & Minioiu, 2007).

be context specific (Sender, 2002). However while these indices may help identify the consequences of poverty and avoid some of the measurement problems associated with 'poverty-line' data (and the identification of the 'poor' as a residual strata), they are not themselves without problems. Ultimately, these indices continue to depict poverty and inequality as 'outcome' and are less useful for uncovering the causes and relational dimensions of poverty, which would require other qualitative and (more contextualized) data. I return to this issue in Chapter 5 in the discussion of the methodology lying behind my empirical study and again in Chapter 6 when I present various 'asset indices' for woodcarving households.

The second key influence of livelihoods approaches on the broader poverty agenda has been a methodological one. That is, through their (implicit) advocacy of 'participatory' methods to gather data from the poor and of using multiple (and often more subjective) methods to give increased weight to people's own assessment of consumption adequacy or well-being (see the work of Moser, 1998; Bebbington, 1999; Carter & May 1998; Ellis & Bahiigwa, 2003; Niehof, 2004; for example). The widespread use of Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs)⁶⁷, consisting of rapid qualitative research (a 'snapshot') ostensibly designed to gain poor people's views on the 'multidimensional aspects of poverty ... have helped to shift mainstream perspectives on poverty beyond narrow income-consumption measures' (Cornwall, 2001), using a wide and diverse range of data gathering (tools). Although PPAs are now claimed to represent the authentic 'voices of the poor' (Narayan et al, 2002), evidence shows (Cornwall, op.cit) that 'participation' by the poor (and thus 'voice') in this context, rarely extends beyond information gathering and into the sphere of active engagement. Indeed, in practical terms it is invariably 'outsiders' who conduct the assessments and interpret the data collected. A further criticism that can be leveled at PPAs (and participatory methods in general) is that they are often very narrow and parochial and generally fail to locate local livelihoods within the wider national and international context (the issue of 'scaling-up' again).

⁶⁷ The PPAs share a close connection and overlapping heritage with SLAs through the work of Chambers (op.cit.) who effectively instigated both approaches.

PPAs, like other approaches to poverty measurement and analysis, often fail to reveal *why* people are poor and how they might come out of poverty. Ideally, one would want a measure or measures based on longitudinal data, sufficiently disaggregated to identify dynamic changes in household well-being (including intra-household differences) and to distinguish transitory from chronic poverty (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003)⁶⁸. There is an important role, too, for smaller-scale studies focusing on living standards in particular regions and districts (see De Sousa, op. cit., for example). There may also be a need to distinguish, conceptually and analytically, between rural and urban poverty. Baker and Schuler (2004), for instance, argue that the analysis of urban poverty requires a different set of tools and techniques both for the identification, and targeting, of the urban poor.

As I have argued earlier (see Sections 2 and 3 of the current chapter), in Mozambique forests and forest-products are relatively important for rural livelihoods, and can potentially contribute to poverty reduction in multiple ways. Unfortunately, there, as elsewhere in Africa, more powerful actors often determine issues of access and rights to resources, and their governance (Bird and Dickson, 2005), thus severely limiting the extent of the benefits available to the poor. Commercial craft production can represent an important means for poorer people to enter the cash economy and to create and capture value at the local level (Belcher et al, 2005). Indeed, based on the findings from a number of case studies, Campbell et al (2005: 250) conclude that woodcarving, under the right conditions, 'can make a significant contribution to household incomes' and help to overcome poverty. However, they also recognise that unless the conditions are right – in terms of both access to raw materials and the availability of buyers (increasingly from the tourist sector) - woodcarving is in danger of becoming an 'employment of last resort'. Governments in many sub-Saharan countries (including Mozambique) are giving greater weight to supporting the development of tourism and the tourist sector, because it is seen to offer the promise (at least) of supporting rapid and sustainable economic growth and increasing access to foreign exchange. However, it is also a sector which is

⁶⁸ The term 'chronic' poverty is used to refer to individuals/households who are consistently below the poverty line, while 'transitory poverty' refers to those who move above and below the poverty line. In this typology, the 'non-poor' are those who are always above the poverty line.

ripe for 'capture' by both governments and private sector operators and from which poorer groups can be (and are) excluded. This is a theme I pick up again in Chapter 4 when I focus on the recent growth of tourism in northern Mozambique.

I would argue that what is needed for an understanding of poverty and livelihoods more generally is a focus on particular localities and experiences - but set within a carefully identified range of structural relations and conditions - in this way following the poverty trajectories of individuals and individual households. A good example is offered by the work of Whitehead (2002) in north-east Ghana involving a 15-year tracking of household livelihood change, through which she was able to approach a 'political economy of livelihoods', at once personal and contextually rich. The use of life histories provides another means of understanding poverty dynamics (Kothari and Hulme, 2004; Sender et al, 2006). Although on a smaller scale, my empirical study has similarly embodied longitudinal elements and life histories to try to capture carver livelihood trajectories (see Chapter 5) and the role of contingency, institutions and 'place' (or location) in shaping carver lives. The next chapter therefore presents an analysis of the broader historical and policy context in Mozambique within which carver livelihood trajectories have been played out.

Chapter 4: History of Survival, Resistance and Development in Mozambique and Cabo Delgado

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is designed to place the current study in a broader perspective and does so by offering contextual material in three main areas. Firstly, I describe the social history of Cabo Delgado and northern Mozambique more generally, emphasising issues of colonial resistance, migration, economic and social transformation and class. I dovetail this (in the second section) with a critical examination of the impact of government economic policies and priorities in post-Independence Mozambique. The ‘donor- driven’ model of development recently pursued by the Mozambican government has led to patterns of growth and accumulation that have privileged foreign and domestic private sector interests over those of the poor. Far from an ‘economic miracle’ (Castel-Branco, 2010) this model of economic growth has not led, as many observers insisted and indeed predicted, to rapid and sustained poverty reduction, but to growing inequality. I provide summary evidence of this for Mozambique, with a particular emphasis on the experience in Cabo Delgado, while noting major shortcomings in available data. The Mozambican government has pursued a two-pronged (private sector led) approach to economic growth in Cabo Delgado (and northern Mozambique) over the last ten years, whilst relying on international donors to provide social infrastructure. One economic ‘prong’ has been natural resource exploitation, particularly forestry, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 6. The second ‘prong’ has been a focus on developing coastal and wilderness areas of northern Mozambique as major tourist destinations⁶⁹. In the final part of this chapter I therefore look at the development of tourism in Cabo Delgado, and Mozambique more generally, with the aim of assessing both its scale and ‘pro-poor’ credentials. Its contribution to the livelihood opportunities open to the Makonde woodcarvers is also briefly considered – a theme that is addressed more fully in Chapters 6 and 7.

⁶⁹ Rhetorically, at least, the government had also had a focus on agriculture; in practice, however, the sector has in most respects been left to itself.

4.2 Historical Context

4.2.1 Origins and Settlement of the Makonde on the Mueda Plateau

The Makonde were known to have been present on the Cabo Delgado coast from as early as the mid-1700s and began to occupy the Mueda plateau from the late eighteenth century. Their withdrawal to the plateau followed the intensification of the slave trade in the region and lengthy and damaging wars with their Ngoni and Yao neighbours (Newitt, 1995)⁷⁰. Indeed, West (2005: 28) believes that Makonde ethnic identity itself emerged from a melding of people with diverse origins, with no settlement on the Mueda plateau completely 'impervious to the slave trade, whether as victims or perpetrators'. Settlements would sometimes include people taken captive from lowland settlements surrounding the plateau, or absorb people (often Yao or Makua) who had taken refuge. In an environment where small disorganised communities were under threat, the internal trade in slaves helped to protect settlements by building up their strength or status (Newitt, 1995: 253). The Makonde of the Mueda plateau from the beginning have therefore lived within what West (2005: 82) calls a 'vortex of cultural encounter and transformation', with their 'identity...configured and reconfigured in historical moments of interaction and juxtaposition with Other identities and traditions - whether Makua, Yao or Nguni, whether Arab, Portuguese or Dutch, whether Christian or Muslim...'.

There is some dispute over the origins of the people who eventually coalesced as the Makonde ethnic group. Willett (2002) suggests that they migrated from the southern Congo basin; Kingdon (2002), on the other hand, offers support for the view that they originated from south of Lake Nyasa, migrating to the area that is now Cabo Delgado in several distinct phases during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Mozambican Makonde share a common origin with other Makonde groups who now occupy the Newala plateau in southern Tanzania, and as indicated have close links with

⁷⁰ Many were refugees from the regional trade in slaves from the eighteenth century onwards and found the plateau more defensible. Other migrants to the plateau were in search of fertile land (*likonde*). Initially, the various groups referred to themselves by the names of the elders who founded the settlements, only later recognising themselves collectively as Makonde (meaning 'people in search of *likonde*'). (West, 1998; 2005)

the Makua and Yao, which sometimes extends to kinship. The Yao had been trading and settling along the coast (as far as Kilwa, in what would later become southern Tanganyika) from before the eighteenth century (Alpers, 1969); in the early nineteenth century the Makua, too, were known to have traded food crops across the Rovuma river, as an alternative to trading with Portuguese controlled Ibo⁷¹.

The Portuguese presence in northern Mozambique was limited to small custom posts and offshore settlements until well into the 19th century. The growth of the slave trade from the late 1700s increased Portuguese interest in the north of the country, but trading was largely coordinated by the Swahili sheikhs who controlled the coast. The Swahili sheikhs superseded the Marave and Makua potentates who had previously ruled the region (Hafkin, 1973). The relationship between Portuguese and sheikhs, originally forged partly in response to Makua incursions, was an uneasy one, characterised by Hafkin (1973: v) as the 'politics of survival'. The Portuguese benefited from Swahili commerce, the Swahili from the Portuguese political system and a measure of military protection. The demand for slaves led to a weakening of the Makua as they became the primary target for the slave traders; as a result, by the end of the 19th century the Makua territory (in modern day Niassa and Cabo Delgado provinces) was virtually depopulated. The growth in power of the Sheikhs and the spread of Islam inland from the coast, in addition to the expansion and deepening of merchant trading networks, also dramatically transformed Makua culture. 'Even the Makonde, who had acquired...a reputation for exclusiveness and recalcitrance...were being coaxed out of their plateau fastnesses by the penetration of merchant capital and the circuit of commodity exchange by the late 1880s', (Alpers, 1984: 371). The development of market relations and the imperatives of exchange amongst the Makonde in this way pre-dated colonial occupation.

⁷¹ After the end of the gold trade in south of Mozambique in the late 18th century, the Yao and Makua trade in ivory, slaves, wax, animal skins and food stuffs in northern Mozambique 'was the only commerce enriching the Portuguese treasury' (Hafkin, 1973).

4.2.2 Colonial control, resistance and class formation in Northern Mozambique

Three distinct historical phases served to shape the post-Independence political economy of (northern) Mozambique (Munslow, 1983). In the early colonial period (1880-1930), large tracts of the north of Mozambique were leased to foreign chartered companies, deepening the process of underdevelopment that the slave trade had begun. The period 1930-1960 saw the intensification of coercive labour policies and forced crop production in an attempt to supply raw materials and profit for the Portuguese colonial state. In the third phase, the late colonial period (1960-1974), the liberation struggle was fought out against the backdrop of a failing colonial state. Foreign capital was encouraged by a Portuguese government which itself did not have the financial or administrative resources to invest in Mozambique. Throughout all three phases, migration (mainly to Tanganyika) increasingly served as both a way of countering colonial oppression and an important contributor to the 'social economy' of the region, including the process of class formation and economic differentiation.

Great Britain pressured the Portuguese to establish 'effective occupation' of northern Mozambique from 1890. 'Although the frontiers had been fixed in 1891 and the rivalry of Britain and Germany for influence in the new state had been contained by the secret agreement of 1898, the weakness of the Portuguese administration continued to cause problems' (Newitt, 1995: 415-416). The Swahili fought to maintain their economic control of the Makua population in the face of a growing Portuguese presence in Cabo Delgado. However, the resulting minor revolt was easily suppressed by the Portuguese (Hafkin, 1973). After the final (belated) demise of the slave trade in all its forms in the last part of the 19th century, the 'economic centre of gravity' moved south of the Zambezi River with Portugal effectively becoming a 'rentier' state (Munslow, 1983).

Without the financial capital to invest in Mozambique or the administrative capacity to manage it, Portugal invited foreign companies in to exploit the territory. In northern Mozambique, the Nyassa Company was granted a 25-year charter over the provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado in 1891 (Vail, 1976). However, the company, too, found it

difficult to raise enough capital or to apply sufficient control to effectively administer the region's population (Neil-Tomlinson, 1977). It only achieved this in 1912, just before the region became a site of conflict during the First World War. There were early attempts at establishing plantations and the territory later (1903-1913) became a source of labour for the South African gold mines when the company came under the control of a South African-owned holding company (Nyassa Consolidated)⁷². Later, the population was made to pay an increasingly punitive hut tax. Portuguese colonial officials retained a share of all taxes collected and could set up their own plantations (West, 2005).

It was not until 1917, under threat of invasion from German East Africa, that the Portuguese attacked and subjugated the Makonde on the Mueda plateau (Newitt, 1995). A company of Portuguese soldiers, together with a large number of Makua 'irregulars' recruited for the operation, (which lasted from April to September 1917) occupied the Mueda plateau⁷³. The (uneven) course of the campaign and the spirited resistance of the Makonde is described at length by West (2005: 94-98). After the end of the First World War (in 1918) control of the Mueda plateau (and much of northern Mozambique more generally) reverted back to the Nyassa Company, which was by then owned by British interests and effectively an instrument of British colonial rule (Newitt, 1995: 419). The company's administrative posts (and a system of governance centred on appointed 'chiefs' or *capitão-mor*) were based on those established earlier by the Portuguese military. From early on, 'colonial governance produced tensions between ordinary Muedans and elders whom the concessionary Nyassa Company, and later the Portuguese administration, used as native intermediaries in the collection of taxes and the recruitment of *corvée* labour' (West, 2005: 83)⁷⁴.

After the Nyassa Company's lease expired, jurisdiction and control over the region passed almost seamlessly (certainly from the point of view of the oppressed inhabitants)

⁷² The Nyassa Company moved to German control in 1913.

⁷³ Newitt (op.cit.: 419) suggests that 'lingering memories of this campaign created suspicion between Makua and Makonde in the era of liberation'.

⁷⁴ The Nyassa Chartered Company set about destroying the power of (traditional) chieftaincies to more firmly establish and embed state control over Mozambique's territory and to more effectively subordinate local lineage structures (Harrison, 2002).

to the Portuguese colonial administration. As West (2005: 101) concludes, '(c)ontinuity was observed at the local level, as company posts were transformed into colonial administrative posts, and many company officials stayed on as state officials'. Like its company predecessors the colonial administration used local 'chiefs' as administrative intermediaries (now calling them *autoridades gentílicas*) to assist in the extraction of forced labour (*chibalo*) – generally for road building – and to collect the hut tax. Wage earning opportunities on the Mueda plateau or in surrounding districts were almost completely absent, with what jobs that were available paying abysmally⁷⁵. Households were inevitably forced to produce and sell cash crops (like groundnuts, sesame, cashew, cotton etc) to local merchants, or where possible to work as contract labour for colonial interests (including migrant labour for British-owned plantations in Tanganyika, Nyasaland and Rhodesia), to pay this tax (Isaacman, 1996). O'Laughlin (2002) sees this intensification of commodity production and exchange as the inevitable result of the forced labour policy and the resistance that followed its imposition. In this way commodities became a necessary part of rural livelihoods and also served 'to tie rural livelihoods to global market movements, to make labour-power a commodity that was routinely bought and sold in diverse ways, and to give those who had capital the capability to exploit' (O'Laughlin, 2002: 5).

Makonde resistance to colonial control and exploitation took various forms. Munslow (1983: 54) talks of individual Makonde villages offering their 'own guerrilla resistance'. Alpers (1984) sees the dramatic increase in 'spontaneous' migration from Nyassa and Cabo Delgado provinces to Tanganyika following a steep increase in the hut tax in the 1920s as a 'creative response' to the changing economic and political climate in Northern Mozambique at the time⁷⁶. Large numbers of Makonde diaspora were drawn to the sisal plantations in the south-eastern Tanganyika, with many others migrating to

⁷⁵ The small number of colonial settlers on the Mueda plateau hired fewer than 50 workers each, while the Mocimboa Sisal Syndicate hired large numbers, but 'paid a pittance' (West, 2005: 104).

⁷⁶ According to Alpers (1984), the numbers of Makonde in Tanganyika (which includes both those born on the Newala plateau and those arriving from Cabo Delgado) rose from 75,000 to 144,000 between 1921 and 1931, the increase largely caused by migration. A 1948 census in Tanganyika indicated 27,000 Mozambican Makonde over the age of 16; this compares with total Mozambican Makonde numbers of about 136,000 in 1950, with the number living on the Mueda plateau put at 48,000 (West, 2005:104, based on Dias, 1964).

Dar es Salaam, an additional (and important) factor of differentiation. Given the wide differentials in potential earnings, with wages up to sixty times more on sisal plantations in Tanganyika than in Cabo Delgado (West, 1998), migration certainly made economic sense. The Makonde resisted forced agricultural production in many other ways including acts of sabotage, arson, insurrection and flight into uninhabited bushlands where they formed new communities. In Chapter 2, I discussed how the production of blackwood (mpingo) carvings for sale to Europeans, which brought in cash and allowed the carvers to offset the worst effects of this taxation, could also be viewed as a form of individual and collective opposition. Munslow (1983: 67) sees this as a form of 'cultural resistance' and a way the Makonde kept 'their culture alive, in spite of continued cultural repression'.

Under the Salazar government from the 1930s onwards, the Portuguese focused on increasing the production and trade of raw materials from their colonies. Following a massive expansion of cotton production from 1938 (after the granting of State Cotton Board concessions), heavily concentrated in the three northern provinces (Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula), the Makonde along with other groups inevitably became more broadly incorporated into the colonial capitalist system through increased commodity production and exchange, the forced labour system and a expansion of wage labour. In this way, the cotton regime in northern Mozambique engendered rural class differentiation; indeed, on-going problems and patterns of rural poverty and the livelihood opportunities available to the rural poor in contemporary Cabo Delgado often have their roots in these earlier structural changes and the differentiation that took place during the colonial period⁷⁷.

Compared to the rest of Mozambique, the northern Provinces arguably experienced a later and less complete (formal) incorporation into the international capitalist mode of production or what Alpers (1984) characterises as the 'immature capitalist mode of

⁷⁷ The Colonial cotton economy was based entirely on smallholder labour until the beginning of the armed struggle in the early 1960s. Both anti-colonial sentiment and insecurity caused by the war contributed to the decline in cotton production by smallholder farmers. From this time the colonial regime began an aggressive promotion of cotton production by commercial settler farmers (Ofico & Tschirley, 2003).

production' characteristic of Colonial capitalism⁷⁸. The arguably greater complexity of class formation and differentiation in Northern Mozambique (Wuyts, 1989) was accentuated by patterns of outward and inward migration (largely to Tanganyika) which continued in waves from the 1920s until the 1980s. In terms of migrant households in Tanganyika in the 1940s and 1950s, Alpers (1984), identifies five different 'classes of labour'⁷⁹: household subsistence production; peasant commodity production; seasonal agricultural labour; plantation wage labour; artisanal production. However, membership of these 'classes' was far from reified; as my research identifies (see Chapters 6 and 7). Makonde migrants might typically move from subsistence production to plantation labour to artisanal production (which often involved further migration from rural to urban settings and occasionally to a 'third country')⁸⁰.

Most Makonde migrants to Tanganyika returned eventually to Mueda (or elsewhere in Cabo Delgado), even after several episodes of work and residence abroad. Some brought back consumer goods and durables (like bicycles or sewing machines) which were either unavailable, of poorer quality or much more expensive in Mozambique than in Tanganyika (West, 2005). From the late 1950s, returning migrants (which included some Makonde) underpinned the further differentiation of capitalist relations in the countryside in Cabo Delgado; cross-border trading activities (often conducted by young men) expanded and the renting of land became possible fuelling the growth of a local petty bourgeoisie and the *privados*, or commercial farmers. The restricted growth of industry and formal sector employment in the urban centres of Cabo Delgado – mainly in and around Porto Amélia (now Pemba) – meant the development of an industrial working class was limited⁸¹, although a growing force of 'classes of labour' was developing.

⁷⁸ 'Forced labour in the Portuguese colonies is the most extreme form of exploitation existent anywhere in Africa...But at the same time provides the clearest evidence of its retardation' (Anderson, 1962; quoted by Pitcher, 2002: 9 fn).

⁷⁹ 'Classes of labour' is my preferred choice of terminology (after Bernstein, 2006). Alpers (1984), uses the term 'categories'.

⁸⁰ Exemplified by the life of FM after his migration to Tanganyika in the 1950s and his subsequent travels to Kenya (Chapter 7).

⁸¹ Even at the time of the 1970 Census, the urban population in Cabo Delgado was estimated to be barely 10,000 (Munslow, 1983: 95).

Harry West (2005: 107) talks of Lázaro Nkavandame, the son of a *capitão-mor*, 'who worked for many years as a labour overseer in Tanganyika before taking up cross-border trade on a significant scale', as epitomising the 'new generation of enterprising young men' emerging on the Mueda plateau in the 1950s. In 1957, he received permission to set up an agricultural cooperative in Mueda district (*Sociedade Agrícola Algodoeira Voluntária dos Africanos de Mocambique*⁸²) and later set up several more; the Portuguese permitted its members to be exempt from *chibalo* and other forms of 'forced' labour practices. Despite the entrepreneurial intentions of Nkavandame, Munslow (1983) believes that the cooperatives played an important role in the politicisation of the peasants and provided a base for FRELIMO's embryonic organisational structure in the region. Later, Nkavandame became head of the Department of Interior Organisation in Cabo Delgado (as part of his role as FRELIMO's Provincial Secretary), before his eventual expulsion from the Party.

Returning migrants also brought a heightened political consciousness to Cabo Delgado, which had developed through their exposure to Tanganyikan nationalism and later from the lessons of Tanganyikan Independence in 1961. Associations formed in exile among Makonde migrants on the sisal estates eventually led to the formation of the Makonde African National Union, later to become part of the Mozambique African National Union (MANU) in Mombasa, Kenya in 1961⁸³. However, as yet, '(i)n terms of their class interests, while these Mozambicans rejected Portuguese colonial rule, they did not necessarily reject the capitalist regime with which they had become familiar in Tanganyika' (Alpers, 1984: 380). Indeed, FRELIMO's emergence as a Liberation 'front', based on the stated aims of opposition to colonialism and support for national independence (rather than socialist revolution), reflected both its origins as the product

⁸² By 1958 it had 1,000 members and by mid-1959 more than 1,500, before it was effectively destroyed by the local colonial cotton company worried about possible competition. Nkavandame (and others) were briefly imprisoned in late 1959; after his release Nkavandame set up another cooperative with Portuguese agreement 'profiting personally from hiring out a tractor to those who wanted it' (Munslow, 1983: 71).

⁸³ The Makonde African National Union was behind the mass peasant protest that precipitated the Mueda massacre on the 16th June 1960 in which 600 people were killed; for many this clearly demonstrated the limits of peaceful resistance (Munslow, 1983). Following this incident, it was this organisation which mobilised support in Mueda for the nationalist movement. MANU representatives used existing social networks (like catholic missions) for recruitment. MANU was eventually absorbed within FRELIMO when the latter was formed in June 1962. (West, 1998)

of several different pre-existing nationalist groups and the fact that it had emerged from an alliance of different classes – workers, peasants and the petty bourgeoisie (Munslow, 1983: 82).

FRELIMO launched the armed struggle (in Chai, Macomia district) in September 1964. The immediate impact was the disappearance of colonial authority in many rural areas of Cabo Delgado and the end to forced labour and the head tax on all adult males. Most of the traditional Makonde areas around the Mueda plateau had been formed into liberated zones by the end of 1965 (although continued attacks and heavier fighting in the late 1960s in some areas caused a further large-scale exodus to Tanzania). Gradually, in these liberated ‘zones’, new methods of production were introduced (including modern animal husbandry, irrigation systems and innovative food processing and storage facilities) often based around various forms of collective structure. FRELIMO organised agricultural collectives to produce food for consumption and to produce a surplus to supply the army. A network of shops was established. The local Makonde carvers, as described in Chapter 2, were also organised into collectives producing for export, which generated them guaranteed returns; Kingdon (2002) asserts that by the end of the war in 1974, Makonde carvings had become very significant export ‘commodities’ for FRELIMO, although he does not provide explicit quantitative evidence in support of this⁸⁴.

FRELIMO’s policies were not without resistance, however. It became clear that the removal of colonial administration did not at the same time remove the pre-existing system of private enterprise, and in fact there were elements opposed to this outcome. Indeed, as Munslow (1983: 96) notes, the term ‘cooperative’ was often (disingenuously) used for a ‘system of private enterprise where the peasants were working collectively (but) for the benefit of the chairman’s own pocket’. Further, Nkavandame and others were keen to distract attention from their own activities by using tribalism to try to mobilise support and painting the leaders of FRELIMO as ‘southerners’. Meanwhile,

⁸⁴ However, the economic, social and stylistic impact of the carving ‘collectives’ was certainly crucial for the subsequent development of Makonde carving in Cabo Delgado and is explored in detail at various points in this study.

Portuguese response to FRELIMO in the north of Mozambique centred on forcibly moving peasants from their dispersed settlements into large protected villages (*aldeamentos*)⁸⁵, as well as on a campaign to promote hostility between Makua and Makonde ethnic groups.

As Castel-Branco et al (2001) indicate, at end of the colonial period the Mozambican peasantry could neither be characterised as ‘uncaptured’ (Hyden, 1980), with limited involvement in the monetary economy, nor as a mass of independent smallholder producers engaged in commodity production. Munslow (1983: 142) describes four ‘identifiable forms of production relationship’ within FRELIMO’s zones of control: individual production by peasant families dominated, but there were also; ‘so-called pre-collective *machambas*’, or adjacent individual plots, to facilitate mutual protection from predators; collective *machambas* worked in addition to private plots, with the distribution of production based on relative labour input, and; total collective production within FRELIMO’s structures. Only in Cabo Delgado did the last of these – full cooperative production – emerge, and ‘even there not extensively’. Immediately pre-Independence, the ‘peasantry’ accounted for well over 80% of agricultural production in the province, with cashew and cotton the two main cash crops (Wuyts, 1989).

4.2.3 Post-Independence Policies: from Socialism to Liberalisation

The first two years after Independence in 1975 were characterised by mass emigration of Portuguese settlers and a disintegration of colonial structures in both urban and rural areas. By 1977, FRELIMO had articulated its strategy, based on Marxist-Leninist principles, to transform Mozambique into a modern, socialist country. However, FRELIMO’s policies towards the countryside (which involved *inter alia* the establishment of state farms and villagisation) signally failed to recognise the myriad experiences and

⁸⁵ This was done mainly to isolate them from the guerrillas but proved highly unsuitable (with the villages being too far from ‘traditional’ fields) and therefore unpopular and counter-productive. Munslow (1983: 121) indicates that 440,000 people were claimed (by the colonial government) to be in *aldeamentos* by the start of 1972, the vast majority of these in Cabo Delgado and Niassa. He suggests that the policy was not a ‘complete failure’ with ‘a large measure of success amongst the Makua people in the south of Cabo Delgado’.

transformations engendered by colonialism or the differing patterns of rural accumulation and social differentiation in the countryside; in other words, the 'multiple ways in which rural Mozambicans gained a living' (Pitcher, 2006: 92). The rationale for the state farms that were established may have differed from those of former colonial companies, but they shared similar features. Firstly, the processing facilities for agricultural products (like cotton and tobacco) remained highly concentrated. Secondly, while the state farms were partially reliant on direct and collective production to grow and harvest export crops, they also depended heavily on the family sector, as in the colonial period (West and Myers, 1996; Pitcher, 2002). Indeed, although FRELIMO justified its agricultural interventions in terms of Marxist ideas and terminology, a more significant (if unconscious) influence was the legacy of centuries of intervention in agriculture by central government (Cravinho, 1998).

There was a profound sense of continuity in the use of state regulations to achieve political goals. Harrison (2002) discusses how FRELIMO's refusal to recognise 'traditional authority' for instance alienated the party (and state) from the critical mass of the peasantry. The 'traditional authorities' were denied any role in land distribution, with their place taken by (appointed) village officials. Dinerman (1994: 570) criticises the lack of cognisance of existing agricultural systems; '(p)ost-independence development planners evinced an almost wilful disregard for the complexities and specificity of local circumstances, mechanistically imposing state farms, production cooperatives and communal villages on the rural economy'. Villagisation was aimed at changing the 'landscape of power in rural Mozambique' (West, 2005: 167); village-based institutions were to replace the 'hierarchical' kinship-based authority structures (Munslow, 1983: 140). The new economic 'landscape' would see '(e)conomic affairs, including agricultural production and trade for urban-produced consumer goods...(being) mediated by cooperatives whose leaders, too, would be elected from within' (West, 2005: 168).

Communal villages included about 20 per cent of the total rural population in Mozambique in the early 1980s. Three-quarters of the villages and most of the

population included in them were in Cabo Delgado, where FRELIMO began its liberation campaign. According to West (2005: 166), FRELIMO characterised the process of villagisation as a 'form of social contract'; the rural population would gather into settlements of between 250 and 1,000 families (suggesting village sizes of 1,000 to 6,000 inhabitants, or more), where they would construct their own homes and buildings to serve as schools, health centres, shops, party offices etc, somewhat akin to the Maoist land reforms in China in the 1950s. Teachers, health workers and others would be provided by the government, along with a clean water supply and better transport networks. However, the manner in which villagisation was enforced and 'policed' seemed to demonstrate that it was not simply a means for creating socialism in the countryside, but also an important way of maintaining security and control. By the early 1980s the insurgency campaign waged by the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) had reached Cabo Delgado. FRELIMO was able to use the communal villages as a way of preventing attacks. Although there were some raids on villages in the lowlands surrounding the plateau, Mueda district remained relatively free of RENAMO incursions although the threat of violence remained a concern throughout the 1980s (West, 2005: 173).

Villagisation disrupted existing 'traditional' *likola*-based patterns of residence, increasingly forcing people to build houses next to those with whom they had no kinship ties. Economically and socially, villagisation also appears to have reinforced the trend towards differentiation that it had been implicitly designed to reduce (Bowen, 2000). 'Since the most successful cooperatives were formed from existing settler farms, FRELIMO's concentration of resources in state farms and cooperatives privileged the regional centres of commercial accumulation of the colonial economy. The labour reserve areas were left unprotected and in poverty' (O'Laughlin, 2002: 38). There is some evidence to suggest that rich peasants were influential in several areas partly because they had enjoyed stable residence and had not, like many in the rural male population, to migrate in search of work (Pitcher, 2002; West, 2005).

The brief phase of central planning put in place by FRELIMO between 1977 to 1983 ignored existing patterns of peasant livelihoods (in terms of combinations of wage labour and household production), leaving them essentially intact. Relationships between state and peasantry continued to operate mainly through the market. FRELIMO maintained the colonial crop pricing system, but reduced its flexibility by eliminating price differences related to geography, seasonality and quality. Although the aim was to unify agricultural marketing, the policy favoured production close to urban markets and led to a fall in the quality of produce (Cravinho, 1998: 97). In the post-Independence period, during both the phase of central planning and that of economic reform that superseded it, FRELIMO's ideological preferences mean that the peasantry was invariably defined as a (more or less) homogenous group of subsistence producers 'delinked from monetary circuits' (Wuyts, 2001: 1). Consequently, the agrarian policies that emerged during the era of central planning ignored the extent to which (household or collective) livelihoods had become increasingly dependent on 'market-based entitlements'. In urban areas, manufacturing and industrial output was affected by the production and marketing problems in rural areas, compounded by a lack of skilled workers and poor management, although FRELIMO also improved the conditions of the urban workforce (Pitcher, 2006: 93).

FRELIMO's 4th Congress in 1983 initiated a period of reform and economic reconstruction, which represented a radical shift from state-centred economic management, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism, to market capitalism (Castel-Branco et al, 2001). The new policy line aimed to direct more resources (credit, land, inputs and consumer goods) towards both peasants and private producers and to increase the output of consumer goods. Agricultural producer price rises were announced. Wuyts (2001) provides a useful summary of the economic reform process as it affected agriculture, and the imperative for the expansion of private smallholder production that underpinned it.

Many of the policy measures adopted by FRELIMO in the 1980s and 1990s mirrored the dominance of the 'peasantry as smallholder' literature in rural research and policy at

the time, which had at least partly followed from the 'dualism' which counter-posed peasants and external interests. FRELIMO's position seems to have been built on two primary assumptions. Firstly, that the poor and middle peasants were not already involved in commodity output and exchange and, secondly, that only private farmers were capable of producing the rapid results needed in a shortage economy. Several studies (Cramer and Pontara, 1998, Cramer et al, 2008) question FRELIMO's prioritisation of smallholder agricultural development and the hostility towards large scale farming in Mozambique, as well as the lack of analytical attention given to both poor rural wage-workers and the role of rural-rural migration. There was also an apparent failure to understand the commitment needed to ensure the expansion of wage labour and the availability of consumer goods as an incentive for smallholder production (Wuyts, 2001).

Already, by the mid-1980s, the government had begun to make overtures to the West and to reduce state intervention. From 1987, under the guidance of the IMF and World Bank it reduced tariffs on imports, liberalised foreign exchange and introduced a number of laws welcoming private investment. The first Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the Economic Rehabilitation Programme (PRE), introduced in January 1987 reduced or eliminated a range of subsidies, including those on transport, consumer goods and education, whilst raising rents on state housing (Hanlon, 1996; Pitcher, 2002). For most Mozambicans, the liberalisation and privatisation of the economy (which began in earnest in 1985 and accelerated after the implementation of the PRE in 1987) was a contradictory experience. On the one hand, the re-establishment of trading networks and increased availability of consumption goods were clearly welcomed; on the other hand, the introduction of 'outside' interests (both foreign and domestic), and the 'chaotic alienation of land' that accompanied this appeared to undermine 'the very control of rural residents over resources that are fundamental to their survival' (West & Myers, 1996: 28)⁸⁶. Privatisation in Mozambique took place on an unusually large scale in comparison with the rest of Africa (Castel-Branco et al, 2001).

⁸⁶ See also Pitcher (1998: 140) who reports how 'the granting of large tracts of fertile land to investors and government officers... (generated)...fears of loss of land and loss of income' among peasants, causing them to find solace in 'traditional' institutions.

Over fifteen hundred enterprises (either entirely state-owned or in which the state had a majority stake) were privatised by the Mozambican government by the end of the 1990s (Cramer, 2001). Inefficient state enterprises were sold off (West and Myers, 1996) and partners were sought to help in the exploitation of key natural resources. In Cabo Delgado, 'the state focused attention on graphite and marble mines, generating employment for a few hundred provincial residents while sharing substantial profits with foreign investors' (West, 2005: 261). A similar model later characterised timber exploitation in the Province: State officials, Party leaders and business interests registered claims over forest land on the Mueda plateau selling concessions to international timber companies from Japan, South Africa and more recently, and on a far greater scale, to those from China (Sun et al, 2008).

In the broader agricultural sector, too, the impact of privatisation was at best mixed, with access to land (by design or default) biased in favour of large-scale enterprises and the developing strata of medium and small-scale capitalist farmers (Wuyts, 2001). Castel-Branco et al, (2001: 9) later concluded that '...there is no evidence that peasants have benefited from...the process of privatisation... in any significant way since they face fragmented markets usually controlled by large traders'. Smallholder peasant farmers thus fared poorly following the break-up of the state agricultural sector.

In these ways the economic reform process led to a further marginalisation of the peasantry, and increased social and rural differentiation. Many on the Mueda plateau (and elsewhere in Cabo Delgado) saw the liberalisation of the Mozambican economy in terms of a withdrawal of the state from the 'essential spheres of Mozambican life' (support for schools, health care and infrastructure, as well as peasant agriculture), rather than the expansion of economic opportunity (West, 2005: 260-261). International NGOs were left to fill the vacuum left by the state's exit from these 'essential spheres'. The success (or otherwise) of this market-driven 'model of development' (and wider issues of growth and poverty reduction) is examined in the following section.

4.3 Development and Poverty Reduction in Mozambique

4.3.1 Development strategy in Mozambique since the 1990s

In 1992 hostilities between FRELIMO and RENAMO ceased (after heavy international pressure) leading to the signing of the peace accord in Rome. The outcome of the 15-year conflict was the widespread destruction of the country's infrastructure, particularly in rural areas and towns outside of government military control. Some sources suggest that up to one million Mozambicans died as a result of the war (Hanlon and Smart, 2008) with about 4 million people or over a quarter of the population being internally-displaced and a further 1.7 million seeking refuge in neighbouring countries (Newitt, 1995: 571). Cabo Delgado appears to have been relatively less disrupted than other provinces by displacement and by the destructive impact of war. While the war had a devastating impact on schools and health care units across the country, with about 60% of schools nation-wide either destroyed or closed between 1983 and 1991, 'only' 20% of schools in Cabo Delgado were affected, compared to over 85% in Tete and Zambezia and almost 70% in Niassa (Azevedo, 2002: 33). Following the end of hostilities, almost 24,000 refugees returned to Cabo Delgado from Tanzania (about 1% of total international returnees to Mozambique); Niassa, in stark contrast, welcomed back over 167,000 (mainly from Malawi) and Tete over 820,000 (op.cit, 2002: 164).

The ending of the war also effectively marked the final demise of socialist policies⁸⁷ in post-Independence Mozambique. The peace accord opened the way for the first multiparty elections in 1994 and indeed was presaged on conditions being in place for these elections to occur. The war had caused devastation throughout the country leaving a 'decimated infrastructure, a weak economy and a fragile institutional base' (World Bank, 2007) making reconstruction a clear and urgent priority. Damage was estimated at about US\$20 billion (Hanlon, 2008). The end of the war led to a temporary

⁸⁷ This appears to have been true both in terms of rhetoric and of policy for as Pitcher (2006: 95) in hindsight points out '(with) the implementation of structural adjustment in 1987 and major constitutional changes since 1990, the government has dropped most references to socialism' and actively pursued the 'airbrushing of socialism out of official Mozambican history'. This allowed FRELIMO to 'court new allies amongst business communities and to build a new 'neo-liberal' national identity amongst an emerging black middle class' (Sumich, 2009: 8).

'peace dividend' as people returned to their land and began farming again or opened up new land (Hanlon, 2007b: 4). Demobilisation of almost 100,000 former fighters was smoothed by a package of support, funded by the government and by the UN, covering their 'salary' for a period of two years (Hanlon, 2008). The repair of roads and other infrastructure also helped to generate employment and stimulate trade which had been stifled during the war, but the impact was limited in scope and short-lasting. Under these circumstances, and needing urgent and large-scale inflows of capital, the government was inevitably drawn into relying further on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank for assistance and on the growing presence of bilateral donors and UN agencies.

Although the resulting 'neo-liberal' approach was blamed at the time on external pressures, it was readily embraced (and loyally adhered to) by the Mozambican government (and by influential sections of FRELIMO's political elite) as a development strategy from the mid-1990s onwards. The policies inevitably resulted in reduced state intervention, market liberalisation and more widespread privatisation of rural and urban enterprises. The economic expansion that followed prompted both a growth of rural wage employment and of the informal sector, but also (in contrast to problems of labour shortage that characterised the colonial era) led to widespread formal sector unemployment (Wuyts, 2001). The urban labour force grew at 3 per cent per year between 1997 and 2003, well above the rate of growth of employment (World Bank, 2007). Much of the (limited) expansion in formal sector employment was in the service sector; the manufacturing sector, in contrast, 'suffered from job destruction, shedding jobs at 10 per cent per year on average (between 1997 and 2003) as part of privatisation and restructuring' (World Bank, 2007: ii). Within the expanding 'informal sector', itself, there was increased segmentation beyond the 'traditional' self-employed producer or trader sector and in the direction of growing wage employment and asset accumulation. The overall outcome of this phase of recovery was macroeconomic growth, but with increasing inequality of access to opportunities in the formal sector (and a 'missing middle' of small and medium-sized firms), resulting in marginalisation for many urban and rural dwellers (Wuyts, 2001; Hanlon and Smart, 2008).

This ‘donor-driven’ model of development⁸⁸ has led to a heavy emphasis in government policy on health and education, infrastructure (roads, electrification and telecommunications), and, more recently on ‘governance’ (Castel-Branco, 2008; Cunguara and Hanlon, 2010), but the state has done little to tackle long-standing and entrenched inequalities in the economy. This has left economic growth heavily reliant on the Mozambican private sector which is at best nascent, or effectively non-existent (Hanlon, 2007: 15), certainly in large parts of the country; its focus can be viewed as ‘rentier’ in several respects, not least the emphasis on resource extraction and investment in banks. Meanwhile, patterns of economic growth, investment and trade in Mozambique have been narrowly concentrated on sectors and projects which contribute little, directly, to employment or labour productivity (Castel-Branco, 2011). This has led to a relative neglect of food production and availability, with resultant rises in food prices. There have been large and growing land acquisitions in Mozambique⁸⁹ by foreign investors (Cotula, 2011: 13), with investor interest often focusing on ‘the best land in terms of irrigation potential, soil fertility, proximity to markets, or availability of infrastructure’. It is too early to assess the impact of foreign involvement on food output and wage employment, but it is likely to increase competition for land.

The private sector (and private investment) that has emerged has inevitably tended to focus on a few key sectors with potentially high returns which can be easily ‘captured’ – large natural resource or energy projects for example. The evidence on this appears stark and unequivocal, but is rarely emphasised in government or donor policy documents. Over the last decade, in excess of 60% of total private investment has been allocated to the mineral and energy sectors and related infrastructural projects⁹⁰; of the

⁸⁸ Mozambique’s reliance on overseas development assistance has been relatively high, regionally (Cunguara and Hanlon, 2010: 1). This has heightened the imperative to depict Mozambique as a ‘success story’ in order to legitimise the chosen approach and policy options (Castel-Branco, 2011).

⁸⁹ Although fraught with measurement difficulties, the World Bank (2010) conservatively estimated that almost 2.7 million hectares of land in Mozambique were acquired by foreign investors between January 2004 and March 2009 (presented by Cotula, 2011, in Table 2: 12).

⁹⁰ As Castel-Branco (2011) points out the investment in the mineral and energy sectors is itself heavily concentrated in a small number of very large projects (the Mozal aluminium smelter and the Sasol natural gas project accounting for a staggering 20% of GDP). These tend to be capital-intensive, fail to develop significant linkages with the wider economy and benefit from large fiscal incentives (while repatriating significant amounts of profits).

11% of private investment going towards agriculture and the agri-industrial sector, a full four-fifths was directed to commodity exports requiring little or no processing like forestry and logging, cotton fibres and tobacco (Castel-Branco, 2010). In the north of Mozambique the particular emphasis has been on 'premium' tourism or mineral or timber extraction, mainly foreign-owned and offering few jobs or local linkages.

Where the private sector has demonstrated some broader success in the agricultural sector it is either because foreign investors have been willing to share risks with local growers as in the case of tobacco, or because the government has intervened to support small producers and cooperatives as in the case of cashew nuts (Hanlon, 2007b). However, recent progress in the cashew sector should not be overstated and major structural problems still exist (Kanji et al, 2004). Almost 80% of the Mozambican population still rely on agriculture as their main source of livelihood, with a higher proportion (almost 87%) in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula (IFTRAB, 2005), but with a growing reliance on a myriad of non-agricultural activities for household well-being and survival (see Chapter 3). In order for meaningful development to occur – involving growth with equity and sustainable poverty reduction – a far-reaching transformation of the agricultural sector is required. For this shift to take place, however, the state needs to be more actively involved, but the problem is that at present 'FRELIMO lacks a coherent agriculture and rural development strategy' (Cunguara and Hanlon, 2010: 22), partly reflecting major debates within the party itself, and appears reticent or unwilling to intervene. It remains suspicious of the small commercial farming sector (representing perhaps 30 per cent of the rural population, country-wide⁹¹), preferring (and here its emphasis matches that of donors) the encouragement of large foreign-owned farms and 'welfare' support (education, health, roads) for subsistence farmers.

The development 'model' followed by Mozambique over the last decade and a half is, however, coming under increasing criticism both from within the country and from

⁹¹ This estimate is from Cunguara and Hanlon (op.cit.: 18), who characterise this group as having significant non-farm income and being active in cash crop production of some form.

outside observers. As Castel-Branco (2011: 2) argues, the idea of an economic ‘miracle’ (or what he prefers to term a ‘mirage’) in Mozambique is a ‘myth...created by donors and adopted by the Mozambican government, not by ordinary Mozambicans’. The problem has been (as West (2005: 7-8) found during his research with residents of the Mueda plateau) that Mozambicans have felt themselves ‘forcibly exposed to the discourse of neo-liberal reform’ by the government and vulnerable to ‘the unrestrained exercise of power by self-serving individuals of both local and foreign origin’. Several of the largest domestic beneficiaries of market liberalisation and privatisation have indeed been companies that FRELIMO itself had denounced after Independence, but which now have a significant and growing stake in the Mozambican economy. This exploitative ‘extractive’ model of development is starkly illustrated by developments in the forestry and logging sector in Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique over the last decade (Sun et al, 2008). Chinese interests are heavily involved throughout the timber ‘supply chain’ and dominate the timber export trade. Chinese and other foreign companies have been given easy access to forest concessions with limited enforcement by the government of legislation restricting extraction rates and requiring in-country processing of some valuable species, while little benefit from these natural resources accrues to local communities (see discussion in Chapter 6, Section 2.1). While only marginally affected as yet, for the Makonde woodcarvers this is likely to mean growing problems of raw material availability in the future.

While Pitcher (2006: 88) advances the thesis that FRELIMO’s active development of new ‘coalitions of support from domestic and international investors’ has been a key component of the party’s ‘discursive and institutional strategy’ to distort the past, or to engender what she terms ‘organised forgetting’, the evidence to support this seems unconvincing. The reality is probably both more complex and more subtle than this. The shift in strategy and rhetoric by FRELIMO to one that encourages and favours entrepreneurialism has not followed a ‘smooth trajectory...as state obligations (receded) in the face of ‘neo-liberal’ opportunities’ (Sumich, 2009: 8). While building links with the business community, FRELIMO has recently introduced ‘pro-worker’ legislation;

however, far from championing one group or another, 'in practice it appears as if FRELIMO equally penalises everyone' (op.cit.: 8).

4.3.2 Poverty and inequality in Mozambique

Mozambique is still a very poor country in spite of what the World Bank (2007: i) describes as its 'astonishing success' in achieving high levels of sustained economic growth, together with improving social welfare and political stability over the last decade and a half⁹². However, it is apparent that any economic gains that have been made have been very unevenly shared between sectors, households and communities, with evidence of worsening inequality in many regions (Hanlon, 2007). While the World Bank (2007) views this as a 'paradox', to many researchers and critical observers, as I have outlined, it is an inevitable outcome of the recent economic policies pursued by the Mozambican government.

As Wuyts (2011a) points out, the 'growth-poverty linkage' – which causally and directly links macroeconomic growth (per capita GDP) with poverty reduction (possibly adjusted for changing income inequality) - has at its core the assumption that economic growth is 'always and everywhere' pro-poor. This however requires not only a clear distinction between those in a given population who are 'poor' or 'non-poor', but an assumption about how aggregate output growth (or accumulation) is split between growth in employment, in labour productivity and in wages (or what Wuyts (2011a: 446) calls 'the underlying mechanisms that determine the dynamics of income'). It also requires an examination of how patterns of growth and accumulation affect relative price changes in an economy. In Mozambique, the recent character of economic expansion (Castel-Branco, 2011) – heavily focused on extractive industries, very large projects and favouring export production, as I have shown – has meant a slow growth in employment, in aggregate labour productivity and in the output of food and essential consumer goods for the domestic population. Wuyts (2011b) illustrates how, for

⁹² The World Bank (2007) suggests that economic growth in Mozambique averaged 8.3% per annum between 1996 and 2006.

Mozambique, high rates of economic growth between 2002 and 2010 (of over 7% per annum) may still be consistent with little, if any, reduction in poverty for a large proportion of the population. Adjustments for population growth and rapidly rising food prices (which increased by over 11% between 2002 and 2010), reduces the estimated growth in GDP per capita in Mozambique in this period to barely 1% per annum. It seems highly plausible (rather than paradoxical) that this is compatible with a scenario in which the incidence of poverty remains the same or even worsens, depending on assumptions on inequality.

Given the character of the economic expansion in Mozambique, it is therefore unsurprising that poor households have benefited less from growth than better-off households. Household insecurity has risen, with half the rural people above the poverty line in 2002 falling below it in 2005 and differentiation between the poor and 'non-poor' increasing dramatically (Hanlon, 2007). The Third National Poverty Assessment (3rd NPA), published in October 2010, drawing primarily on 2008/09 data indicated (as many had increasingly begun to anticipate) that after 2003 economic growth 'did not trickle down to the poor' in any meaningful way; on the contrary, on several indicators, inequality had actually worsened in recent years in both rural and urban areas. Sustained poverty reduction appears elusive as ever.

The Mozambican government (through the National Institute of Statistics or INE) has implemented three national household consumption surveys (one every six years between 1996 and 2008), all of which have attempted to derive representative estimates of poverty broken down to provincial level (see Table 1, below). The first national survey⁹³, undertaken in 1996/97, indicated a national poverty headcount of 69%, with a greater prevalence of poverty in rural areas than in urban centres. The Mozambican government used the results of the survey to develop the first Action Plan to Reduce Absolute Poverty (later known as PARPA I), which covered the period 2001-2005. For the first time this emphasised poverty reduction as a central goal of government policy, but was criticised for embodying a view of poverty which was narrow

⁹³ Inquerito Aos Agregados Familiares (IAF, 1996/97)

and strictly monetary in focus (San Martin, 2001). Although PARPA I made occasional reference to issues and processes of social exclusion, these were not systematically examined (Isaksen et al, 2005: 6).

Table 1: Poverty in Mozambique 1996/97-2008/9 (Poverty Headcount: Levels, %)			
Region	1996/97 (IAF96)	2002/03 (IAF02)	2008/09 (IOF08)
National	69.4	54.1	54.7
Urban	62.0	51.5	49.6
Rural	71.3	55.3	56.9
North:	66.3	55.3	46.5
Cabo Delgado	57.4	63.2	37.4
Nampula	68.9	52.6	54.7
Niassa	70.6	52.1	31.9
Centre	73.8	45.5	59.7
South	65.8	66.5	56.9

Source: Ministry of Planning and Development (2010:26), Table 3.5; based on IAF96, IAF02 and IOF08.

Notes:

1. Estimation of poverty rates is based on the cost of basic needs (CBN) approach to the construction of 13 different province and region-specific poverty lines. The CBN relates to the cost of the amounts of food in a typical diet required to provide a minimum calorific requirement of 2150 kcal/day. Food and non-food poverty lines were defined separately and combined.

2. The three national poverty assessments measure welfare in terms of consumption based on household expenditures and consumption of home-produced goods, but excluding commodities supplied by the public sector free of charge and the consumption of home-produced services.

A second national survey was conducted in 2002/2003 (IAF02), again producing poverty data disaggregated to provincial level. The survey indicated a substantial decline in the national poverty headcount (but with Cabo Delgado an exception). There were widespread concerns, however, related to possible sampling and enumeration errors with IAF02. More fundamentally, the changed method used for establishing the

poverty line between IAF96 and IAF02 effectively meant that neither the surveys nor the results they generated were directly comparable (Hanlon, 2007: 9).

The second PARPA (PARPA II, 2006-2009), which drew on the outcomes of IAF02, had a stated objective of improving the capacities of, and the opportunities available to, all Mozambicans, especially the poor. It recognised the need for a broadening of the conceptual framework to encompass the multidimensional characteristics of poverty (an issue explored earlier in Chapter 3) and the extent of vulnerability to natural and economic shocks. The third national survey (IOF08) undertaken by INE in 2008/2009 was similar in most respects (apart from some minor changes in questionnaire design) to the two previous surveys (IAF96 and IAF02)⁹⁴. Following from PARPA II, it gave much greater prominence to wider, non-monetary dimensions of poverty (including ownership of private goods and measures of child well-being). The results, in terms of poverty headcount were disappointing, with the national poverty rate (at 55%) showing a marginal, though not statistically significant, increase on IAF02. The dramatic changes in provincial-level poverty data over the course of the three surveys is surprising, but is likely to indicate methodological errors.

The 3rd NPA (MPD, 2010: xiv) itself warns, for instance, that undercounting of food consumption is likely to be significant ‘particularly at lower levels of geographical aggregation where sample error is already large’ and, because of this, ‘undue emphasis should not be placed on the precision of poverty estimates at the provincial level’. However, the 3rd NPA also points to an increase in public services (increases in educational and health provision), as well as greater household asset ownership and improvements in housing quality (see Table 2) as attesting to ‘significant progress across a wide range of non-monetary poverty indicators’ at both national and regional levels, although the evidence is uneven.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ IOF08 was based on a random sample of 10,832 households, with interviews spread over a year (between September 2008 and August 2009) in order to capture any seasonality, given major differences between pre- and post-harvest agricultural prices.

⁹⁵ Hanlon and Smart (2008) explore whether expansion of ownership of bicycles (and other consumer durables) can be taken as ‘proof of development’; they conclude that ‘(t)here has been development, but not enough’ to provide the majority of people with sustainable routes out of poverty.

**Table 2: Poverty Indicators
(Housing Quality and Durable Assets), 2002 and 2008**

Region	Solid roofing (%)		Bicycle (%)		Cell phone (%)	
	2002	2008	2002	2008	2002	2008
National	24.8	29.5	28.1	38.1	4.3	23.7
Urban	56.2	64.6	19.4	24.1	11.4	53.7
Rural	11.4	15.3	31.8	43.8	0.5	13.1
Cabo Delgado	6.8	11.2	24.1	42.6	0.2	11.4
Nampula	8.1	11.8	26.7	35.3	1.0	10.2
Niassa	4.4	8.1	56.9	65.4	0.5	12.6

Source: MPD (2010: 72), Table 8.1 & 8.2; based on IAF02 and IOF08.

Notes:

1. Solid roofing is here defined as roofs made of a durable material (concrete, zinc or fibrous cement, known as lusalite).

4.3.3 What has been happening to poverty in Cabo Delgado?

The levels and trends in poverty rates in Cabo Delgado that emerge from the three national surveys illustrates many of the contradictions encountered when focusing on provincial-level consumption-based poverty estimates, with reliability falling dramatically at these levels of disaggregation (MPD, 2010: 26-27). The magnitude and direction of fluctuations over the three surveys (see Table 1) means that little credence can be given to them as indicators of the extent of poverty in the province. Most recently, the 3rd NPA reports an unrealistically sharp reduction in poverty rates in both Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces between 2002/03 and 2008/09 (see Table 1). In a desperate effort to justify this finding, the 3rd NPA suggests that the measured fall in poverty could be in part due to relatively larger improvements in access to public services and infrastructure (although from a lower 'base' than elsewhere in the country), but this appears to be purely conjectural and unsupported by the evidence⁹⁶.

⁹⁶ Hanlon (2007: 12) for instance reports on a 2005 study by Cruzeiro do Sul of three villages (one each in Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa) that appeared to find that villages with more infrastructure (schools,

Can the issue of poverty and poverty reduction be approached through an examination of broader, 'non-monetary' indicators? The evidence provided by the 3rd NPA itself in terms of education and healthcare as proxies for improvements in well-being appears to be mixed at best. Primary school enrolment rates have risen in both urban and rural areas in the North and are moving closer to the national average. However, while one third of school-age children in urban areas now have access to secondary education this opportunity is available to very few rural children, unless they are able to migrate.

Table 3: Net Enrolment Rates (NER), Primary & Secondary, 2002/03-2008/09 (%)		
Region	2002	2009
North Urban – Primary	64	74
North Rural – Primary	52	68
North Urban – Secondary	13	33
North Rural – Secondary	0.2	0.4
<i>National Primary</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>National Secondary</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>22</i>

Source: MPD (2010: 14), based on Figure 3.3. Data from IAF02 and IOF08.

Notes:

1. NER is defined as the share of all children of official school age (primary, 6-13; secondary, 14-18) who are enrolled in a school whose official age range corresponds to the child's age; secondary school includes technical schools.

While access by rural households in the North to healthcare appeared to have improved between 2002 and 2008 (MPD, 2010: 74), for urban households it seems to have worsened quite dramatically. There was a similar trend in terms of the accessibility of a safe water source; while the proportion of rural households in the North with 'safe water' rose to about one-third, there was decline in the share amongst urban households, such that less than a half had access to safe water in 2008/09. Perhaps the most damning evidence that emerged from IOF08, however, concerned continued high levels of child malnutrition in rural households in the North (3rd NPA: 20-21).

health facilities, access to better roads) were not materially better off than those with less, suggesting that infrastructure alone has not been enough to ensure 'development'.

As O’Laughlin (2010: 5) points out in her recent exploration of the links between deprivation and health in Mozambique, a focus on inequality rather than poverty per se, directs us to treat poverty and disadvantage as ‘relational positions, rather than viewing poverty as being ‘a characteristic of individuals’. In policy terms, it also involves thinking more critically about the limitations of relying on ‘trickle-down’ from economic growth as a panacea for poverty reduction and the need to more actively explore questions of redistribution. At an aggregate level, the evidence on inequality in Mozambique, both underlying patterns and recent trends, appears inconclusive, but it certainly does not suggest any dramatic improvement. However, more significantly, Boughton et al (2006) found that between 1996 and 2002 inequalities in the distribution of consumption among the wealthiest and poorest groups *within* regions appeared to widen, particularly in rural areas, a conclusion echoed by Hanlon (2007: 5).

Other approaches – either using alternative data sources or qualitative methods of enquiry – might help generate better insights into inequality in Mozambique (and poverty levels more generally) at provincial, district or village level (Isaksen et al, 2005). An example of this was the study conducted by Tvedten et al (2010) in Murrupula rural district in Nampula. This focused on 120 households in four villages, which were visited in 2006 and again in 2009, and used a mixed methods approach to gather longitudinal data. They found that the majority of households had not seen any significant change for the better between 2006 and 2009 and indeed the overall assessment was of increased differentiation between households and communities, clear evidence of the failure (so far) of economic growth to ‘trickle down’ to the poorest.

The current study uses a methodology which is similarly ‘pluralistic’ and based on a small-scale, longitudinal study of a defined group of individuals and households (Makonde carvers in Cabo Delgado). Many of the carvers (see Chapters 6 and 7) believe that the best opportunity for improving their livelihood prospects rests with tourists and tourism. The Mozambican government, too, recognises the potential contribution that tourism can make to growth and development and is committed in policy terms to its promotion (PARPA II, 2006: 35). This chapter’s final section therefore

scrutinises the tourist sector in Mozambique, and in Cabo Delgado more specifically, to critically examine the scope it offers for poverty reduction, as well as its 'pro-poor' credentials.

4.4 Tourism in Mozambique

4.4.1 Strategy and Dimensions

Over the last ten years, the Mozambican government has placed increased emphasis on tourism as one of the main foci (alongside natural resource exploitation and industrialisation more broadly) of its national development and poverty reduction strategy. This is not surprising given that the World Bank has embraced tourism as a 'leading sector' (World Bank, 2006) and policy priority in many African countries (Gerosa, 2003)⁹⁷. The establishment of a separate Ministry of Tourism (in 2002) was the first stage of this, which was followed by two policy statements - the National Tourism Policy and Implementation Strategy (NTPIS) in April 2003 and the Strategic Plan for the Development of Tourism in Mozambique in February 2004. The latter document spelt out the government's view of the longer-term potential of the sector for the Mozambican economy - embodied in its 'Tourism Vision 2020'⁹⁸. Later, PARPA II (in 2006) explicitly included Tourism as one of its 'Economic Development pillars' (Republic of Mozambique, 2006: 33)⁹⁹. However, the Mozambican government has been relatively slow to move from general policy objectives to more specific plans and actions (ODI, 2006a; FIAS, 2006), leaving the initiative to the private sector (and largely foreign interests). This has not been helped by missing or inconsistent data (ODI, 2006a), as

⁹⁷ Up to 2003 some 80% of African Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) had contained a reference to tourism, although very few had set out concrete strategies linking tourism and 'pro-poor' growth.

⁹⁸ The 'vision' was that by 2020, Mozambique was to become Africa's 'most vibrant, dynamic and exotic tourism destination' famed for its beaches, eco-tourism and culture' with a target of 4 million tourists a year. To place this in perspective, Mozambique received an estimated 1,200,000 international visitors in 2002 (MITUR, 2004), with the number rising to 1,900,000 in 2008 and over 2 million in 2009 (UNWTO, 2010).

⁹⁹ Regarding tourism, PARPA II contains a main objective of developing Mozambique as a 'world-class tourist destination' while ensuring an 'environmentally healthy exploitation of the natural resources that form the basis' of its potential development (PARPA II, op. cit.: 135-136).

well as limited analysis of the underlying factors driving tourism in Mozambique and its potential impact on the economy.

Available data suggests that the tourism sector's overall contribution to the economy (in 2004) was about 3% of gross value-added (GDP at factor cost), making it 'moderate, but not insignificant in comparative terms'¹⁰⁰ with other economic sectors (Jones and Ibrahimo, 2008: 4); using a Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) the authors estimate that the sector has the potential for generating relatively strong 'multiplier' effects and backward linkages compared to other sectors in terms of aggregate job creation and economic value-added. The FIAS study¹⁰¹, undertaken on behalf of the Mozambican government, used value chain analysis to examine the constraints facing the tourist sector and possible policy initiatives that could increase the value added by tourism, but 'revealed little about the share of receipts 'captured' by the poor – missing many pro-poor issues' (Ashley and Mitchell, 2007: 2). The study did nevertheless capture for the first time some of the key features and dynamics of the tourist market in Mozambique.

Historically, the treatment of tourism within the development literature has mirrored and been shaped by dominant theories of economic growth and development (Elliott and Mann, 2006). Most recently the emphasis in development discourse and policy has been on the potential 'pro-poor' impact of tourism (Mitchell and Ashley, 2009). Ashley & Roe (2002) argue that tourism has characteristics which make it intrinsically more conducive to pro-poor growth than other services, or manufacturing. In their view, at least, tourism can potentially be more labour-intensive, inclusive of women and the informal sector, and it can be based on natural or cultural assets owned or under the control of the poor; it is also a potential agent or catalyst for broader change¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ According to the WTO (2005), this compares with a tourism share of GDP of about 8% in South Africa and 7% in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

¹⁰¹ The Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS) is a joint facility of the International Finance Corporation and World Bank.

¹⁰² There is a recognition that these claims are difficult to prove directly because data is 'missing' or unavailable (ODI, 2006a), partly because the tourist sector is difficult to isolate statistically and in part because a lot of the employment benefits for instance accrue to the informal enterprises and so may not be recorded. Nevertheless, Mitchell and Ashley (2007: 3) report that 'data analysis reinforces the assertion that tourism is labour intensive compared to the non-agricultural economy, often by a factor of around 1.2 to 1.7, and is about twice as labour intensive as industry.

However, while at the macro-level there may be grounds for believing that host countries might capture significant economic benefits from tourism, there is less convincing evidence that these benefits actually reach the poorest (ODI, 2006a). According to Roe et al (2004: 9, emphasis in original), '(t)he form of tourism and the extent of access to tourists by local people as well as the volume of tourists define opportunities for pro-poor tourism'. However, while visitor arrival statistics and Tourism Satellite Accounting (TSA)¹⁰³ have allowed an estimate of the aggregate impact of tourism at national level, measuring the effects of tourism on the livelihoods of the poor was (initially, at least) focused on specific sites and localities, often using SLA alongside other methods.

Nevertheless, indicative results from recent value chain analyses suggests that 'pro-poor income' (PPI)¹⁰⁴ from tourism could be substantial (over 25% of destination spending in some cases, including one 'tourist package' each in Tanzania and Ethiopia), but highly variable (Mitchell and Ashley, 2009: 2, adapted from Mitchell and Coles, 2009). An alternative interpretation, of course, is that over three-quarters of destination spending goes to the 'non-poor'. Unless explicit weightings are applied, a VCA will 'treat all 'poor' equally, regardless of gender, geography or other political factors', many of whom may be excluded from access to the tourist 'market'. There is evidence (see Roslan, 2007, for instance) that 'better-off' households benefit more from tourism than the poorest households, therefore increasing inequality, mirroring the findings of earlier work on the relative impact of non-farm diversification in rural areas (Reardon et al, 2000).

Jones & Ibrahimo (op. cit.) identify several factors which are likely to limit the benefits accruing to the poor from the growth of the Mozambican tourism sector (and which will tend to restrict the tourist market for craft products), at least as it is currently configured. These relate to its fundamental characteristics - low average hotel utilisation rates, short

¹⁰³ The TSA system was developed by the World Tourism Organisation and World Travel and Tourism Council to estimate the economic value of tourism at the national level. A Satellite Account is a way of measuring economic sectors that are not designed as industries in national accounts (UN WTO, 1999).

¹⁰⁴ 'Pro-poor income' (PPI) is the wages and profits earned by poor households across all inter-related strands of the value chain (Mitchell and Ashley, 2009).

length of stay (the latter tied in to the high proportion of business tourists) and a low average spend per overseas tourist – and patterns of spending¹⁰⁵. The large share of domestic tourists, whose spending at ‘formal’ tourist facilities (hotels and restaurants) tends to be relatively low (but who spend more on local goods and services) limits hotel occupancy and measurable tourist spending. On the other hand, very little of the spending by overseas leisure tourists appears to spill over into the local economy, towards domestically-owned, independent tour operators, into cultural activities or on retail spending (FIAS, 2006). Finally, the growth of tourism has been associated with increasing demand for factors of production (skilled labour and physical capital) that are relatively scarce in Mozambique, rather than supporting an expansion in employment opportunities for low or unskilled workers. According to FIAS (2006: 83), ‘(m)ost of the inputs required for operating hospitality and tourism businesses are being partly or wholly sourced from outside Mozambique’ and further that over ‘90% of high skilled labour (within the tourist industry) is sourced from South Africa’.

4.4.2 Tourism in Cabo Delgado

Within the NTPIS (2003), parts of northern Mozambique (specifically the Provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula) were to be developed as exclusive, up-market destinations for international tourists¹⁰⁶. This included investment in Pemba as a point of access to a series of small island resorts off the coast of Cabo Delgado and the development of ‘eco-tourism’ in the remote areas of Niassa and Cabo Delgado Provinces. The so-called ‘Northern Arc’ (Arco Norte) was the focus of a three-year Northern Mozambique Tourism Project (NMTP) launched by USAID in 2004, but which so far appears to have had little discernible impact, certainly in terms of the broader community.

¹⁰⁵ International tourist receipts per tourist arrival in 2003 were only US\$240 in Mozambique, compared to an African average of US\$404 (UNWTO, 2005).

¹⁰⁶ This region, which FIAS (2006) terms ‘Mozambique’s unscathed ‘tourism jewel’, includes the Ilha de Mozambique (a World Heritage Site), the Quirimbas Marine National Park (within which lies Ibo Island, named a World Heritage site in 2008), Pemba Bay (the third largest bay in the world after Sydney and Rio de Janeiro) and the Reserva de Niassa and Lago Niassa.

From a low base, the recent growth in numbers of tourists visiting Cabo Delgado has certainly been dramatic (see Table 4), but has been (almost) entirely based on developments in Pemba and northwards along the coast, on Ibo Island and on the offshore islands that make up the Archipelago das Quirimbas. Relatively few tourists visit the Mueda plateau (which remains the heartland of Mozambican Makonde carving, even as the numbers of active carvers has fallen) and there are few or no facilities of international tourist standard there or elsewhere in the interior of Cabo Delgado province, despite some recent small-scale initiatives in community-based and eco-tourism; it is a similar story for other significant settlements supporting Makonde carving groups on any scale (Montepuez, Mocimboa da Praia and Palma). Despite being a sizeable town and the district capital, Mueda, for instance, had (even in 2010) only three very basic guesthouses (*pensaos*), each with limited restaurant facilities, and one other (relatively) informal restaurant in the town. An electricity supply limited to two hours per day, in the early evening at best, does not help¹⁰⁷. The road network remains very poor, making the journey from Pemba extremely difficult even in the dry season; with vehicle rental costs much higher than in the south of Mozambique this further limits the attraction of Mueda and other rural districts to tourists (FIAS, 2006).

Information on tourist visitors to Cabo Delgado is dated and incomplete (and sometimes inconsistent), but it is possible to piece together a broad picture by drawing on a range of sources. The data show, firstly, a rapid rise in tourist arrivals (*hospedes*), nights spent (*dormidas*) and number of hotel beds in Cabo Delgado between 2000 and 2004 (see Table 4)¹⁰⁸. This suggests average length of stay of between 2-3 days in 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Travel Notes, April & July 2005 and May 2010. In May 2010, no municipal supplies of electricity were available, but had to be generated by each establishment. The situation was expected to change once the electricity connection with Cahora Bassa is complete (in 2011/2012).

¹⁰⁸ An unpublished baseline study for the USAID NMTP conducted by George Washington University in collaboration with UCM, Pemba in 2005/2006, collected data on tourist accommodation in Cabo Delgado (op.cit.). This estimated the number of establishments Province-wide at 41, with 867 beds (*camas*); 27 were 'lower end' market (<US\$50/night), seven 'middle market' (US\$51-150) and seven 'high end' (>US\$150). The total number of employees was 969, 85% of whom were male.

Table 4: Tourist Arrivals and Capacity in Cabo Delgado

Year	Tourist arrivals (Hospedes)	Nights Spent (Dormidas)	Beds (Camas)
2000	3,112	5,180	394
2001	11,326	15,986	580
2002	9,612	20,556	669
2003	11,449	27,265	689
2004	22,760	55,761	689

Source: Author's interview with Chief of Department of Tourism Activities, Pemba, 27th April 2005

Average occupancy rates were estimated at 30%, which reflects the highly seasonal nature of tourist visits (with peaks in the dry season, May to August, and again in December). Cabo Delgado accounted for about 5% of Mozambican tourist arrivals in 2004, an increase on 2000, but still lower than expected given the priority afforded to the Province in the Government's tourism strategy. Tourist receipts in Cabo Delgado as a whole were MZM43.4bn (roughly US\$2 million) in 2004¹⁰⁹; however, even this relatively modest figure will have overstated the direct economic value of tourism within the Province given the leakage through imports of staff and consumables, while indirect tourism-linked expenditures are likely to be limited.

This expansion is largely related to new tourist facilities centred on Pemba and, more significantly, offshore islands. Comparison of Table 4 (covering Cabo Delgado) and Table 5 (focused on Pemba-Quirimbas) in 2003 suggests that the latter accounted for over 90% of room nights (*dormidas*). The single largest influence was the opening of the 102-bed Pemba Beach Hotel in 2001, together with the construction of other 'middle and top range' establishments along Wimbe Beach and more recent developments further northwards just outside Pemba. The Pemba Beach Hotel has been aimed at business travellers and as an access point for up-market tourists travelling to island resorts off the coast of Cabo Delgado¹¹⁰ which has tended to limit the length of stay and potential impact on the local economy in Pemba city. Despite its location it has operated

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Chief of Department, Direcção Provincial de Turismo, Pemba (27th April 2005). This figure is consistent with the data published in MITUR (2004).

¹¹⁰ See www.pembabeachresort.com. The hotel is operated by Rani Resorts (www.raniresorts.com) which also runs facilities on Medjumbe and Matembo Islands in the Quirimbas Archipelago.

largely as a foreign 'enclave', having little interaction with the inhabitants living nearby and drawing most of its skilled labour from outside Mozambique. However it did, by the time of my last visit in May 2010, contain two shops which are outlets for local crafts.

Table 5: Tourism Indicators for Pemba-Quirimbas, 2004*

	Pemba-Quirimbas	Share	Total Mozambique
International tourists*	7,000	1.6%	441,000
<i>Business Share*</i>	4,000	2%	200,000
<i>Leisure Share*</i>	3,000	1.2%	241,000
Hotel beds	250	1.8%	13,807
Luxury quality beds	130	1.7%	7,616
Hotels with 100+ rooms	0	0%	7
Hotels with 50-100 rooms	1	5.9%	17
Hotels with < 50 rooms	15	5.1%	296
Room nights*	25,000	3.8%	
Average occupancy rate**	30%	-	28.9%
Hotel employees	350	3.3%	10-11,000
Population	1,246,000	6.4%	19,407,000

Source: See FIAS (2006: 52) for original list of sources.

Notes:

1. * represents 2003 data; ** estimated.

A number of other exclusive tourist resorts (all with accommodation for under 50 guests, but where average length of stay is much longer) have been developed since 2002 in the Quirimbas National Park on the coast north of Pemba and on islands in the Quirimbas archipelago. Most are similarly insulated from communities in which they are located, but two 'eco-tourism' lodges - the Guludo Beach Lodge (established in 2002) and the Ibo Island Lodge (opened first in 2001 and refurbished in 2006); have been developed with stated aims of 'sustainable poverty reduction' and 'enhancing rural development', through actively developing linkages with local populations¹¹¹. There have been benefits to locals from increased employment (for construction, servicing and maintenance) and increased procurement of goods and services. Dixey (2007:13) cautions, however, that 'the benefits accrued from tourism are not evenly spread. Indeed, those that are least likely to gain from tourism are those that are most likely to

¹¹¹ Both lodges were supported by the African Safari Lodge (ASL) programme (see Dixey, 2007 for an assessment of their rather limited impact on local residents).

have their livelihoods negatively impacted on' by conservation initiatives which have reduced access to natural resources or led to human-wildlife conflicts.

While tourism in Cabo Delgado has expanded (and is likely to continue to rise) the inevitable conclusion must be that this growth has been limited, both economically and geographically, uneven in its impact and impossible to characterise as 'pro-poor' however loosely the term is applied. From the narrower point of view of the Makonde woodcarvers based in Pemba and Mueda (especially), this suggests, at best, continued slow growth in tourist demand for their work. Chapters 6 and 7 provide (*inter alia*) insights, gleaned from fieldwork, into the reliance of the Makonde woodcarvers on the tourist market, the ways in which tourists have influenced (both positively and negatively) the production and marketing of woodcarvings in Cabo Delgado and the impact of tourism on carver livelihoods. First, however, I will set out the methodological approach that lies behind the empirical research.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

At the core of this thesis is an attempt to analyse the livelihood trajectories of the Makonde woodcarvers in Northern Mozambique and to develop an understanding of woodcarving as a 'system of provision'. The empirical research that underpins this study focuses on the Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado, the most northerly province of Mozambique and on many measures one of the poorest. Cabo Delgado (Latitude, 10'29' - 14 01'South, Longitude, 35 58' – 40 35' East) is bordered in the north by the Rovuma River, which marks the international boundary with Tanzania, and this proximity has had a crucial influence on the cultural, social, economic and political evolution of the carvers, and on the province as a whole. The Mozambican capital, Maputo, lies over a thousand miles to the south.

This study is constructed around data collected during three periods of fieldwork in Northern Mozambique between 2005 and 2010, supplemented by close and on-going links with locally-based key informants and an additional short data-gathering visit to Maputo (in April 2008). Field research has focused mainly on carvers in Pemba city (the provincial capital of Cabo Delgado) and two nearby villages (Mieze and Walupwana), and those in Mueda town (some 400kms north-west of Pemba) and four surrounding villages in Mueda district (Idovo, Mpeme, Miula and Nandimba)¹¹².

The province of Cabo Delgado has a surface area of 82,623 square kilometers; with an estimated 1.53m inhabitants in 2002¹¹³, this gives it a population density of just under 20 inhabitants/km². Pemba city (Cidade de Pemba) had a population of some 117,000 (density, 604 inhabitants/km²) and Mueda district a population of 109,000 (density, 7.7 inhabitants/Km²) in 2002.

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¹¹² Mueda district (and the plateau on which it is situated), together with the Newala plateau in Southern Tanzania, is the historical locus of Makonde society (see Chapter 4). The village of Miula is conventionally viewed as the 'birthplace' of 'modern' Makonde blackwood sculpture (Kingdon, 2002; 2005a).

¹¹³ INE 2002, *Projeccoes Annuais da Populacoopor Distritos*, 1997-2010.

In terms of methodology, my research questions (see Chapter 1) led logically towards a combination of quantitative and qualitative elements (a 'mixed methods' approach) and one which linked together a series of short-duration fieldwork visits within a longitudinal framework. As a part-time Doctoral researcher the use of three intensive periods of field research over a five year period fitted with the constraints placed on the research by full-time employment. However, it also allowed me to triangulate¹¹⁴ or validate my findings across various dimensions – through the generation and analysis of different types of data, by testing reaction at different levels of analysis – and by mapping actions and (self-) perceptions over time. The first phase of empirical investigation, rapid appraisal and scoping research, in April-May 2005, was designed to enumerate the 'target' population of woodcarvers and thus establish the basis for a focused and viable sampling frame. The second phase, in July-August 2005, was concerned with undertaking a structured quantitative survey of a purposive sample of woodcarver households and facilitating group discussions within each village, association or cooperative surveyed. The data from carver households were then compared with disaggregated national household survey data obtained from the Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE) during a research visit to Maputo in April 2008. Discussions with Maputo-based carvers and traders also provided insights into other stages and participants in the wood-carving 'chain'. The third period of fieldwork in Northern Mozambique was conducted in May 2010. The main purpose was the collection of life histories from a selected sub-group of carvers interviewed as part of the household survey in 2005, in order to establish a longitudinal view of the evolution of individual carver livelihoods. These life histories or biographical interviews were deliberately left until a late stage in the research, because by this point the most important selection criteria for interviewees were clear (Francis, 1992). The 'natural' longitudinal nature of the research process also made it possible through direct observation to explore wider, and longer-term, changes in the composition and economic well-being of carving groups. These observations were reinforced through informal conversations with key informants during my visits.

¹¹⁴ As Brannen (2005) points out, thinking of triangulation simply in terms of checking if data leads to a 'single reality' is problematic; combining data may also permit elaboration, initiation (of new hypotheses etc), complementarity (between quantitative and qualitative data), or indeed contradiction.

5.2 Research Approach and Methods

5.2.1 Researching Carver Livelihoods: research questions and framing

It is important at this stage to provide a more explicit statement of the theoretical framework underpinning the empirical study in order to explain why my research proceeded the way it did, in terms of the focus of the investigation, the priorities for data generation and collection and in the design of research instruments (questionnaires, interview schedules etc). The ‘logic of enquiry’ has been both deductive and inductive, a recognised approach in development studies research (Sumner and Tribe, 2008: 83). The initial quantitative survey which gathered data, *inter alia*, on carver household characteristics, household assets and carving styles was essentially deductive. This data together with information gathered during qualitative research (group discussions, informal conversations and ‘naturally-occurring data’¹¹⁵) permitted an exploratory analysis of key respondents (induction). This identified individuals (or ‘exemplifying cases’) for further investigation using life histories/biographical interviews.

My research questions (see Chapter 1 and Table 8, below, for elaboration) focus on three broad areas. Firstly, I ask what evidence there is of stratification and differentiation within the carving groups and between individual carvers. Secondly, I am concerned with investigating how the particularity of the historical development of carver livelihoods – or the livelihood ‘trajectories’ the carvers have faced as artists and artisans and the networks in which their activities are embedded – can be conceptualised. My review of the literature (in Chapters 2 and 3) identified the practical usefulness of sustainable livelihoods and global value chain approaches in helping to frame my research approach. However, it recognised too that, in contrast to the instrumentality of sustainable livelihood approaches and the stylised typologies of GVC analysis, the methodology of political economy is better placed to reveal both the long-term processes at work in carver lives and their contemporary circumstances. The final research question focuses on the impact of the commodification of Makonde sculpture

¹¹⁵ ‘Naturally-occurring data’, like personal observation, is data ‘which derive from situations which exist independently of the researcher’s intervention’ (Silverman, 2010: 436).

and the development of artisanal markets on the livelihood prospects of the woodcarvers and why some may be better placed than others to benefit as and when opportunities arise.

Selected elements from the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) were used as a guide to data collection in the household survey – including categorisation and scope – supplemented by additional questions looking at carver ‘assets’ and inter-relationships to be explored later in data analysis. This served as a useful starting point in terms of rapid data collection, but was then supplemented by qualitative research (within a political economy framework) intended to help reveal the contingent nature of Makonde woodcarver livelihoods. The research that followed the initial household survey (based essentially on key informant interviews, group discussions and life stories) was therefore designed to allow the examination of processes of change and differentiation, and the interface between the woodcarvers and global markets (and the structure and dynamics of the ‘global’ woodcarving chain).

In the same way, the GCC/GVC framework provides practical guidance on analysing the ‘global’ woodcarving chain, with an emphasis on identifying the stages (or ‘nodes’) in the ‘chain’ linking raw material to end product, exploring issues of ‘chain’ governance and, less successfully, with determining how value is distributed between the different ‘nodes’. Data required for a detailed ‘value chain analysis’ (VCA) ideally range from qualitative information on how the chain ‘functions’ (including interviews with key informants and key actors) to quantitative data on prices obtained and costs borne by different actors in the chain, none of which is easy to obtain and all of which is subject to ambiguity¹¹⁶. The process is made more difficult for a ‘commodity’ like a Makonde woodcarving, where each individual example is hand-made and distinctive, and where as a ‘cultural product’ (see discussion in Chapter 3), the concept of value is much more complex and multi-faceted.

¹¹⁶ Kaplinsky and Morris (2001) and McCormick and Schmitz (2001) offer practical guidance on VCA, where the aim is to analyse the chain from the point of view of artisans/low-income producers. See also the VCA methodology adopted by Rushton et al (2004) in their comparative study of commercialisation opportunities facing 10 non-timber forest product (NTFP) chains in Mexico and Bolivia.

On a theoretical level the GCC/GVC approach directs attention towards typologies of chain coordination and governance and the scope for individual economic ‘agents’ to upgrade or improve the benefits they derive from participation in any chain. As I have argued, however, (see Chapter 3), these ‘ideal-types’ are of limited value in analyzing the impact of the woodcarving ‘chain’ on carver livelihoods. The ‘systems of provision’ (sops) approach (Fine and Leopold, 1993; Fine, 2002), conversely, requires an exploration of the unique, historically-contingent and commodity-specific nature of the livelihood opportunities facing the Makonde woodcarvers of Northern Mozambique and the social relations that surround their carving activities.

5.2.2 Methodological Pluralism: Is there method in my methods?

Methodology is the study of the methods (the process, techniques or tools of data collection and analysis) that are employed in research (Bryman, 2008b: 160). Choice of methodology may be driven as much by pragmatism (resource or technical feasibility), or ideology, as by the underlying epistemological or philosophical assumptions which frame the research (Brannen, 2005). The so-called ‘paradigm wars’ – with the philosophical positions underpinning quantitative and qualitative methods keeping them distinct and competing - that raged for many years, seem now to have given way to (more) peaceful co-existence (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Denzin, 2010). As Bryman (2008a) stresses, the emphasis in these ‘wars’ was on the assumptions (behind the research approach) rather than on the practices (or methods) themselves. Although I would agree with Silverman (2010) that excessive eclecticism or ‘methodological anarchy’ should be avoided at all costs, ultimately it is the particular *purpose* of the research and the theory within which it is framed that must determine the research strategy adopted.

The nature and scope of the research questions posed in this study prompted me to use a ‘mixed methods’ approach or a combination of different research methods and data sources (or what Mikkelsen, 2005, calls ‘methodological pluralism’). The practical considerations related to the logistical constraints underpinning the problematisation of

the research. The particular choice of research methods and techniques offered a number of advantages in terms of both data gathering and analysis, including the identification of inter-temporal changes in livelihood activities, while permitting resource savings when compared to a longitudinal study based on participant observation of a specific group or groups of woodcarvers.

The use of 'mixed methods' approaches has grown in popularity since the 1980s and these are now widely used in social and behavioural research (Brannen, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Hesse-Biber, 2010). Indeed it is increasingly recognised that a thorough and incisive analysis of poverty and livelihoods can only be achieved by using a combination of methods and disciplines (White, 2002; Mikkelsen, 2005; Sumner and Tribe, 2008). In undertaking development research, quantitative approaches are normally best used together with qualitative techniques because '(q)uantitative data analysis is strong at describing the 'what', but weak at explaining the 'why' (Overton and van Diermen, 2003: 50). There is recognition too of potential differences in emphasis between quantitative and qualitative approaches (often with one 'dominant' method) and the sequencing of methods depending upon the research question under scrutiny (Brannen, 2005). In my empirical work I adopted a QUANTITATIVE + qualitative > QUALITATIVE sequence. A quantitative survey was used initially to identify some broad descriptive patterns, including the poverty characteristics of carver households and the similarities and differences between them. The analysis of national household survey data permitted contextualisation of my own survey data. In political economy terms, this gave a preliminary sense of stratification and differentiation in order to identify 'who' the carvers are in relation to various comparators. I supplemented this household data with insights from contemporaneous group discussions and 'informal conversations', and, later, using individual life stories in order to capture the causes and dynamics of poverty and carver perceptions of the importance of culture, history, place and contingency in current livelihood activities. I was able to make judicious and critical use of the various approaches (ie avoiding the danger of over-reliance on any one method and tempering any insights by cross-referencing between methods). The time-frame involved in the research also gave the possibility of iteration between data and partial results, a crucial

consideration given the use of multiple, short duration field visits. The downside, of course, was a lack of immersion in the research environment, with potential impact on both the richness and depth of data collection and first hand appreciation of 'context'.

5.3 The Research Journey

The inspiration for this research can be traced to a number of events (and choices) in my life, which the vantage point of the present invests with a certain inevitability or logic. Whether this should be viewed as serendipity or simply 'biographical illusion' (Järvinen, 2000) I leave to the reader to decide. Firstly, the choice of focus in this thesis – the livelihood trajectories of small-scale artisans in poor countries – meshed closely with my academic background and previous research interests¹¹⁷. Secondly, my experience of living and working as a teacher in Zimbabwe in the mid-1980s and extensive (though far from luxurious) travel during long school vacations to neighbouring countries (including Mozambique and Tanzania) gave me a familiarity with place and the opportunity to observe first-hand the lives of those producing and selling craft products from roadside stalls in which I took an interest. In addition, the 1980s in Zimbabwe saw the growing exposure of Zimbabwean soapstone carvers and the carving genre to international audiences; through visits to the National Gallery in Harare I, too, became more fully aware of the quality, originality and power of African sculpture and artistry. Finally, but perhaps most significantly for this research study, has been my involvement as a trustee for a small charity, the MERRY Trust which has as its first object '*to help build sustainable livelihoods based on artistic and cultural pursuits...in Cabo Delgado, Northern Mozambique*'. (2009: 3)¹¹⁸. I first visited Cabo Delgado, with my family, in August 2002. During our one-week stay in Pemba we made contact with various individuals with links to, or an interest in, culture and cultural activities, broadly defined.

¹¹⁷ I was part of the first cohort of undergraduate students in the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia in the mid-1970s and followed this with an MSc in Agricultural Economics (with specialist study in Rural Development). Since 1988, I have been part of the Department of Economics at the University of Westminster where my teaching has included Development Economics and Development Management.

¹¹⁸ The MERRY Trust was established in 2002, based on the inspiration and legacy of Jani Lewellyn, who died of cancer at the age of 48, but who had spent 20 years of her life supporting young people in Mozambique.

Several of these later became important as 'key informants' helping to underpin the first stage of my research; their local knowledge proved invaluable in framing my research questions and in the planning and conduct of initial fieldwork.

It was during that first visit in 2002 that I became interested in the Makonde woodcarvers. A key early MERRY contact in Pemba was Lesley, one of the owners of Arte Maconde Lda¹¹⁹, a company which (at the time) owned the only shop selling craft items produced in Cabo Delgado, in neighbouring provinces and in Tanzania. One of the company's main product 'lines' were Makonde sculptures, which they sourced from carvers in Mueda and Pemba districts, advising on style and finish, and occasionally commissioning work. From Lesley, I became conversant with the themes and motifs commonly used by the carvers and learnt a little about their cultural background and the role of carving in their everyday lives. Through Lesley, I met Astrid Sulger, a Swiss woman who at the time was working on a study of Makonde master carvers ('artists')¹²⁰, which used individual interviews and short profiles to explore the creative impulse and economic imperative behind their work. I was able to assist in proof-reading the English translation of large parts of the text and through this gained further insight into the everyday lives of the woodcarvers.

During 2002 and early 2003, the MERRY Trust sent funding via Arte Maconde Lda to assist two of the Pemba woodcarving cooperatives (Bela Baia and Karibu Wimbe) with essential building works and to improve the security of storage space for finished carvings¹²¹. It also purchased a shipment of carvings selected and shipped by Arte

¹¹⁹ Makonde and Maconde are often used interchangeably. The conventional spelling in Portuguese is Maconde and hence its usage as a enterprise name here. For consistency, we use the designation Makonde throughout this study, irrespective of whether the country of residence of the carver is Mozambique or Tanzania.

¹²⁰ Published as Kacimi and Sulger (2004).

¹²¹ From the outset, I recognised that there were potential problems or 'risks' relating to this donor/recipient link between the charity I represented and a sub-group of carvers (which later also involved the donation of tools to all three Pemba carving cooperatives). My concern was that this could alter respondent perceptions of both the researcher and of the research project itself, and in a detrimental way. On reflection, it offered a (sympathetic) point of access to respondents and helped build a bond of trust between us, helping to bridge the 'outsider'/'insider' divide. In particular, it facilitated my close association with Daniel Mwanga, a Master sculptor at the Karibu Wimbe cooperative, who helped facilitate access to other carvers, particularly on the Mueda plateau.

Maconde Lda, which were exhibited in Deptford, South London, together with details of the carvers' names, location and background and an explanation of each sculpture. The aim was two-fold; to raise awareness of the quality of the work being produced, and, through providing an indication of the labour time involved in the making of each piece, to invite local residents to reflect on the labour value 'embodied' in the carvings (and ultimately it was hoped to offer a 'fair' price for them)¹²².

I was accepted onto the PhD programme at SOAS in November 2003. Although joining late, I was able to benefit from participation in lively weekly research sessions with staff and the doctoral peer-group in the Department during the 2003/2004 academic year. These provided a useful forum for exploring the strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies, across a variety of research settings, prior to finalising fieldwork plans. The sessions also required the submission of a fuller version of the initial research proposal and its presentation to the group in March 2004; the resulting critique led to a re-focusing and clarifying of my research questions and fieldwork approach.

By the time of the finalisation of my proposal (and PhD upgrade) in late-May 2005, and following a more detailed literature review (including analysis of official data sources), 'outside' presentation of my work and my first visit to the 'field', I had revised my approach to the research problem in several ways. Firstly, I had moved towards an approach more firmly rooted in 'political economy', which emphasised the historical development of Makonde woodcarving and its economic, social, cultural and stylistic transformation as a result of colonialism (and post-colonialism), and a more critical examination of (sustainable) livelihoods approaches. Secondly, I had re-thought my fieldwork strategy to accommodate the findings of my initial fieldwork visit in April 2005, which forced a more targeted approach. There remained the need to design a strategy

¹²² The discussion in Chapter 2 on the difficulties of valuing cultural products and on the need for information on production 'context' to unveil the 'mask' of commodity fetishism surrounding the carvings are both pertinent here.

for my doctoral research that was robust enough to accommodate the inevitable pressures I would face as part-time student with a very demanding ‘day job’¹²³.

5.4 Data Collection

5.4.1 Northern Mozambique, Phase 1: Exploratory Visit, April 2005

The three-week exploratory visit in April 2005 helped to map the ‘field’ and to define the relevant ‘population’. It was primarily concerned with enumerating the woodcarvers to determine the appropriate sampling frame and survey methodology, and to provide information on key individuals for more detailed investigation. Discussions with key informants soon after my arrival, however, indicated that I had ‘seriously underestimated the number of carvers’¹²⁴ in Cabo Delgado, making my (perhaps naïve) plan for a complete survey of Makonde woodcarvers in the province nigh on impossible. The solution lay in a more targeted approach. Along with the two urban centres (Pemba city and Mueda town), I selected two villages within 40 km of Pemba and four in Mueda district, all within 20 km of the town, known to have substantial concentrations of carvers¹²⁵. This, I hoped, would generate a sufficiently representative sample population, allowing comparisons to be drawn between the different ‘categories’/strata of carvers. The resulting census (based on direct enumeration and interviews with ‘office holders’ or village presidents) indicated 165 full and part-time carvers, excluding apprentices. This appeared later to be an underestimate (see Table 9), at least partly due to issues of seasonality and of categorising individuals as ‘carvers’; I discuss the possible reasons behind this in more detail in Section 4.2, below.

It was during the exploratory visit that I became acquainted with some key individuals whose participation in the research process (in terms of logistics, questionnaire focus

¹²³ Over the period of PhD registration I have been Director of Undergraduate Programmes at Westminster Business School, responsible for over 3,000 students across 10 separate courses.

¹²⁴ See Field Notes, 13th April 2005. Although an enumeration of the members of the ‘urban’ woodcarving groups (in Pemba city and Mueda town) would have been feasible (putting aside the fluidity of ‘membership’ at any one time, given the partly seasonal movement between rural and urban areas), recording the number of part-time, rural carvers would not have been so straightforward.

¹²⁵ Conversation with Lesley, Field Notes 13th April 2005.

etc) proved to be invaluable and who early on helped to develop important insights into carver livelihoods. Daniel Mwanga, a carver from Karibu Wimbe Cooperative in Pemba (and its President), was one of these. I was introduced to him by Lesley at Arte Maconde, who recommended him as someone trustworthy and reliable, and relatively fluent in English, who could accompany me on my visits to carving groups¹²⁶. As we travelled together, his good local knowledge of both Pemba and Mueda (he was born in Idovo village, Mueda district) proved very useful and his status as a Master carver (with a close knowledge of techniques and market problems) facilitated acceptance by the carvers. Given my rudimentary Portuguese, the conversations with carvers were generally conducted in chiMakonde¹²⁷, with Daniel translating my questions and respondent answers. There are clearly concerns here relating to the 'independence' or objectivity of Daniel, but his role was one of facilitator, rather than research assistant (or indeed 'gatekeeper'). Without his guidance and support, it would certainly have been more difficult to get the carvers to participate. He helped build the 'collaborative context' for group interviews, by affirming my credentials and motives, as well as serving to legitimate the enquiry in the eyes of the respondents. Although it is not ideal to conduct research through a 'third party', sometimes it may be unavoidable and, when operating in different cultures and with significant asymmetries of wealth and power, may be inevitable. Indeed, in a positive sense, it is possible that a good local interpreter, far from being a barrier to the research process, can become both 'translator' and 'ethnographic informant' (Bujra, 2006).

The other key outcome of the exploratory visit was the interview and selection of two local chiMakonde-speaking researchers, to administer questionnaires and assist with group interviews in the second phase of research (and, depending on their abilities and availability, to provide assistance with life histories in the final phase). The local

¹²⁶ I am conscious that I am open to the criticism that Lesley (and in turn Daniel) acted as 'gatekeepers' in some respect. The term 'gatekeeper' is often used pejoratively to describe privileged individuals who control access to and power over certain resources, knowledge and information (Apentik & Parpart, 2006), with the potential for guiding the researcher (perhaps unintentionally) towards particular individuals, therefore excluding others (Willis, 2006). However, Daniel was by no means 'locally powerful' and respondents would not have considered themselves in any way subordinate to him (Bremen, 1985).

¹²⁷ The use of chiMakonde (rather than Portuguese) for interviews and informal conversations, it was hoped, would add to inclusivity and reduces insider/outsider differences (Bujra, 2006).

university – the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM) in Pemba - proved to be an ideal recruiting ground as students at the university have both a familiarity with basic research methods and are taught in English; staff at UCM also helped to administer research contracts and funding in phase two¹²⁸. Initial briefing meetings with the researchers set out contractual terms and conditions, remuneration, mutual responsibilities and the preliminary plan of research. The timing of fieldwork (planned for July and August) was agreed so as to maximise the participation of carvers, but also coordinated well with the university vacation and researcher availability.

5.4.2 Northern Mozambique, Phase 2: Quantitative Household Survey and Group Interviews, July and August 2005

The first stage of the empirical research – collecting detailed information on the numbers (and profiles) of active carvers in traditional centres of activity – itself generated data not available elsewhere. Despite the importance of woodcarving within the art and craft sector in Cabo Delgado (De Vletter, 2008), existing information on the numbers and distribution of the carver population in the province prior to my census was extremely limited. As far as I am aware, the last detailed enumeration of carvers in the province was undertaken by the Department of Patrimonial Culture in the 1980s; at that time it indicated about 50 carvers in Mueda district and thirty in Pemba¹²⁹. Later, but more narrowly, a UNESCO Artisan Baseline Survey in 1999 identified 11 ‘wood user’ enterprises (covering a total of 20 individual artisans) in Pemba and Mieze, as part of a nationwide survey of 300 artisanal enterprises, covering a range of handicrafts. This included a profile of a woodcarver working in Pemba (as well as one each in Nampula and Maputo). Finally, Jenkins et al (2002) refer to an unpublished report by Moises (2002) looking at the use of African blackwood (mpingo) in Cabo Delgado, which

¹²⁸ The two students selected were Severo Rafael Mpachoca from Namaua, a third year Tourism student and Estevao Richard Nkandjanga, from Mpeme, a second year IT student. Estevao was significantly older and experienced and at that stage (in 2005) married with two small children. Fortuitously, the four of us operated well as a unit.

¹²⁹ Interview with Mr Mpalaume, Director of Patrimonial Culture, Pemba 18th July 2005. On the surface, the numbers that Mr Mpalaume reports appear to be a underestimate, but outward migration of carvers to Tanzania and Maputo in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s due to conflict and lack of commercial outlets for woodcarvings in Cabo Delgado at the time makes this feasible. Indeed, the majority of carving cooperatives in my survey were not formed until the 1990s (Carver Census, April 2005).

indicated that there were nine cooperatives in the province, three in Pemba city (although only two appeared active in early 2002, each with about 10 members) as well as six in Mueda district, plus a concentration of carvers around Montepuez. Again, on my evidence, this appears to be an underestimate of numbers.

My April 2005 census (and identification of carving groups or village 'clusters', see Table 9) was used as a basis for determining the sampling frame for the subsequent household survey. During the household survey itself (which began three months later), a new enumeration of the same target groups and clusters led to an increase in the 'population' to 194 full-time and part-time carvers. The share of those based in 'rural' locations increased, changing the distribution from 45% 'urban' and 55% 'rural' in April to 33% and 67%, respectively, in July 2005¹³⁰. While there may have been some under-recording in the April census (possibly reflecting some misunderstanding of the purpose of the enumeration), there are a number of other feasible explanations for increased carver numbers and the changing distribution. Firstly, the higher recorded number in July 2005 is likely to partly reflect the pronounced seasonality of carving activities (with the dry season bringing with it a lower demand for farm labour), particularly in rural areas¹³¹. Secondly, as the two censuses appear to indicate, group membership is fluid and informal to some extent, however much this is presented as formal and documented; information from the group discussions indicated frequent movement (or temporary migration) of carvers between village and town, and town and village. Thirdly, my initial preparatory visit in April (with an indication that we would be returning three months later) will itself have influenced the numbers of carvers who were present in July, because of the expectation (or hope) of a sale. An important difference between the two enumerations was the disappearance of one of the three carving groups in Mueda town and the virtual demise of another (see Table 9), although this was

¹³⁰ I have defined 'urban' carvers as those based at the three carving cooperatives in Pemba city; all others are counted as 'rural', even those based in Mueda town. A more significant difference would be between those individuals who carve 'full-time' and rely upon the activity entirely for their income, and those who use it as a 'part-time' supplementary activity. In practice, as my research shows, this too can be a misleading distinction.

¹³¹ The subsequent field visit in May 2010 again indicated that a large number of carvers had temporarily 'migrated' back to their *shambas* for agricultural work, while at least one had travelled to an offshore island 'to follow the tourists' (Field Notes, May 2010).

compensated for by increased 'membership' in village carving groups; my final visit in May 2010 seemed to confirm that this was a permanent change, with only one of the original carver groups in Mueda town (Cooperative Chibiliti) remaining.

The clusters (carving cooperatives, associations or village 'groups') which constituted my sampling frame ranged in size (based on the July census) from two to 32 listed members, plus apprentices¹³². The household survey (undertaken over a five-week period in July and August 2005) consisted of individual structured interviews with a sample of 61 carvers (31% of the total), all male, drawn as a purposive sample from each separate cluster (cooperative, association or village)¹³³. The sample (which ranged in size from two to seven individuals) was deliberately chosen to include key members ('office holders') of the cooperative/association and carvers with extensive carving experience¹³⁴; in other words to find out from 'those who know' (Hanlon, 2007). The aim was not to generalise from a statistically significant representative sample, but to derive trustworthy, credible and confirmable data about carvers and their livelihoods (Becker et al, 2006, in Sumner & Tribe, 2008). Although I did not work towards a prescribed ratio of interviews to 'cluster' size, the relative proportions of 'rural' and 'urban' carvers in the sample were *ex-post* very close to that of the carver 'population' as a whole (Table 9). There was generally a tendency for smaller clusters to be over-sampled to make sure big enough sub-samples were drawn (ie Association Livambwe in Mueda town, Association Arte Makonde in Mpeme and the carvers in Walupwana village in Metuge), but given the purposive (rather than random) sampling approach adopted I did not consider this to be overly problematic. Time and logistical issues aside, the key consideration in determining whether a particular sample is sufficiently 'representative' relates to the research question(s) being addressed. In the case of my sample, the

¹³² The number of apprentices attached to the carving groups varied greatly, from one or two in the Pemba cooperatives to 11 in Nandimba (Field Notes, July 2005).

¹³³ In addition, the household survey elicited information on a further 293 individuals who were members of the carvers' households.

¹³⁴ My original intention was to randomly select interviewees – asking a carver to select names from my hat – but the selection this generated during the initial visit (to Bela Baia, in Pemba) was rejected by key 'office holders' in the cooperative. This gave rise to an extended discussion about the purpose of the research, allowing the choice of carver to be negotiated between us, and in the process producing a sample considered 'typical'. Thereafter, the same selection procedure was followed for other interviews. See Field Notes, July 2005.

purpose was not to identify an ‘average representative’ carver (even if this had been possible), but to explore issues of heterogeneity and stratification as well as dynamics (in terms of relations and processes). This required some subjectivity in approach (Abbott, 2007), because the concept of an ‘average representative’ in this context is not particularly useful. These considerations lay behind my deliberate (partly negotiated) choice of a cross-section of individuals from within each ‘cluster’ which was aimed at including relevant and reliable respondents. I return to questions of methodological ‘validity’ later in this chapter (Section 5).

Prior to venturing into the ‘field’ in the first week of July 2005, the contractual arrangements were finalised and agreed with the two researchers. During the course of two meetings at UCM (which Daniel Mwanga also attended), the researchers were briefed again on the aims of the research, the format of the household survey and expectations for the group discussions¹³⁵. These meetings also gave an opportunity to judge the likely compatibility and coherence of the research ‘team’; later experiences in the field and between field ‘sites’– travelling and eating together – indicated that we operated as a coherent ‘team’.

The questionnaire survey and group discussions were completed between 9th July and 13th August 2005. The individual questionnaires, which were written in English, contained a mix of standardized closed quantitative questions (ie Household Roster, General Well-Being and Household Characteristics and Assets) and semi-structured open-ended questions focusing on carver attributes, carving styles and perceptions (see Table 6).

¹³⁵ Field Notes, 7th & 8th July 2005.

Table 6: Questionnaire Structure

A. Household Roster (eg Number of household members; Age/Sex of household members; Educational level)
B. Carver Characteristics (eg Skills development; Carving styles; Ownership of tools; Production, and sales of carvings)
C. General Well-Being (eg Food consumption)
D. Household Characteristics (eg Housing conditions; Facilities; Asset ownership)

Into the Field

The first two days of fieldwork (8th & 9th July) were spent at Sociedade Arte Makonde Bela Baia in Pemba, providing a chance to pilot test the questionnaires and assess researcher capabilities before departing for a period of more intensive fieldwork in Mueda, some 400 kms to the north-west of Pemba. At our initial meeting a small set of tools was offered as a gift to the cooperative. Seven individual interviews were completed with Bela Baia carvers (four by Severo and three by Richard), each lasting between 45 minutes and one hour. This proved to be a good indicator of the length of time needed for questionnaire completion throughout this phase of the fieldwork. The individual interviews took place at the carving cooperative, observed by me, but away from the presence of others and out of earshot. This was the approach followed in subsequent interviews although in some of the villages, where carver dwellings were close to the association or cooperative site, the interviews took place at carver households (permitting a useful cross-check of responses through direct observation of living conditions etc)¹³⁶. In the evening of the 8th July, we reviewed the coding of the data and quality of responses from these first interviews. Both researchers proved themselves sufficiently competent to administer the questionnaire; it was also clear early on that, of the two researchers, Richard was much more meticulous and naturally curious, and able to produce more nuanced interpretations of interviewee responses¹³⁷.

¹³⁶ The household survey included several questions (on living conditions or assets) which could be at least partially cross-checked by direct observation. I used this information to develop 'asset'/possessions scores in order to stratify the carvers (see Chapter 6).

¹³⁷ Of the 61 completed interviews, 31 were administered by Richard and 30 by Severo.

A major concern in interview research is that of the nature of the relationship between interviewer and respondent(s). The 'interviewer effect' (Mikkelsen, 2005) influences how much information people are willing to divulge and how honest they are in their answers. Observing the researchers at work indicated that they were both able to establish a good rapport with respondents. While closely matching the attributes of interviewer and respondent may or may not be desirable (with the need to balance empathy against a necessary detachment), it is anyway difficult, if not impossible to achieve. This is part of the more general problem with research interviews that Kvale (2007: 14) refers to as an inevitable 'power asymmetry' between the researcher and the subject, where the interview is 'not an open conversation between equal partners'. It may be partly based on a lack of 'status congruency' between respondent and interviewer (Bulmer, 1983), but it can arise without any deliberate exercise of power by the interviewer, and is part of the structural features of interview research. Using chiMakonde speaking research assistants with a shared 'cultural' background and a sensitivity to Makonde 'traditions' (and who also knew or had links with woodcarving groups) was a deliberate attempt to bridge part of this 'structural' divide.

Group Discussions

Following the individual interviews (normally immediately after, but sometimes the next day) thirteen semi-structured 'group' discussions were facilitated (one for each 'cluster'), involving the majority of cooperative/association members and providing a complementary source of information to the individual questionnaires (Woodhouse, 2007). These offered access to a larger body of knowledge, than individual interviews – where 'the sum is more than an addition of individual replies' (Mikkelsen, 2005: 172). Initial factual questions relating to the organization and operation of carver activities were followed by the opportunity for participants to develop and pursue their own arguments. The 'agenda' evolved as I attempted to explore and test opinions gathered from previous group discussions and those arising from the research team's reflection on the research process¹³⁸. 'Informal conversations' often developed spontaneously.

¹³⁸ Where carver observations are reported verbatim in this thesis, they are presented indented and in italics and referenced to carving group, location and date of meeting.

These discussions provided important contextual material on carver perceptions of livelihood opportunities (or lack of), while giving key insights into group dynamics¹³⁹; the reflections offered by carvers gave a means of accessing the carver 'voice'.

The group discussion at Bela Baia was held on the morning of 9th July, the day after the initial visit. The original intention had been to invite/select a sub-group of up to eight individuals who would constitute a 'focus group', but it became clear that this would have been logistically difficult and would not have met the emerging needs of our research. Focus group interviews are convened in artificially-contrived, 'unnatural settings' and 'operate more successfully if they are composed of relative strangers, rather than friends' (Cohen et al, 2000: 288). The practice I adopted at Bela Baia and elsewhere was pragmatic and one of non-exclusion, with all carvers who were present permitted to participate in the group discussions, a procedure which Mikkelsen (2005) considers legitimate. The majority of group discussions involved between 10 and a maximum of 25 participants (see Table 9 for details), which proved manageable. This format gave a greater sense of inclusiveness or ownership in the research process. On the surface, it also seemed to encourage spontaneity and provided a valuable insight into group dynamics and power relationships. Indeed, it was instructive to learn from the way participants discussed things, as much as from what they said¹⁴⁰. I was then able to link this to the degree of formality of carving group structure and group coherence and 'success'. The following description of the group discussion at Bela Baia is reproduced verbatim from my field notes and gives a flavour of the process:

¹³⁹ There was clear variation between different Cooperatives/Associations in the degree of deference shown to 'office' holders (ie President, Secretary, Treasurer), which did not appear to be just age-related. The dominance of two or three key individuals in the group discussions held with Association Combatentes Aldeia, in Nandimba, can be contrasted with the more open and balanced discourse amongst carvers at Bela Baia, Pemba (Field Notes, July 2005). I return to this issue in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

¹⁴⁰ According to Watts and Ebbutt (1987), (quoted by Cohen et al, 2000: 287), group interviews are most useful where a 'group of people have been working together for some time or common purpose, or where it is seen as important that everyone concerned is aware of what others in the group are saying'.

We decide to hold the Group Interview/Discussion in the showroom (which measures 15ft by 12ft). Outside, discussion would be disturbed by the noise of passing traffic. I explain the broad process we would follow and ask permission to record the discussion. Estevao translates. Gradually, a total of 21 carvers file in. Start at 9.45am with introductions. Quite a lengthy preamble from Severo (which sets out 'rules' ie any speaker should first give his name; speakers should be allowed to complete their contributions etc). Daniel adds something; passes to Richard to introduce the first question. Some prompting, but then intermittent contributions begin. Initially, discussion is centred around 6 or 7 key individuals; no disagreement expressed; gradually, participation expands such that by the end all but three carvers (some younger individuals) have spoken. There are often lengthy spoken contributions with discussion flowing backwards and forwards...often participants have to wait to speak. One carver (the only Makua – Martins Labus Sijelo) asks to speak in Portuguese. Meeting finishes at 11.05am.¹⁴¹

In subsequent visits to other carving 'sites', group discussions followed a similar pattern, but were held in the open-air, under a thatched canopy, where the carvers worked. Formal introductions would involve the giving of gifts (comprising a small set of tools for the carvers and something for the village president, if present).¹⁴² A brief explanation of the aim and structure of the group discussion, invariably initiated by Severo (who, although the younger, was the more outgoing of the two researchers) would be followed by contributions from Richard and Daniel. Initial questions on the composition and organisation of the cooperative or association (or reasons for the lack of these in some village settings) were followed, *inter alia*, by thematic discussions related to raw material availability, carving styles, market access and the historical evolution of carving as an activity, including some questions that had arisen from individual interviews relating to carver livelihoods. The group discussion concluded with participants being offered the opportunity to raise any issues as, what Severo and Richard termed in their transcripts, 'Open questions'.

It is worth reflecting, however, on the circumstances in which this information was produced – with individuals talking in the presence of an audience of researchers and fellow carvers. In other words, was the research environment 'procedurally

¹⁴¹ Field Notes, July 2005

¹⁴² Copies of photographs taken at the time of my previous visit were distributed prior to the discussion and helped to 'legitimise' the research 'teams' status or at least reduce the distance between 'insider' and 'outsider' (see observations in Section 4.4, below). See McEwan (2006) or Harper (2003) on the growing use of photographs in development research.

consequential', 'that is whether *how* the data was gathered influenced its reliability' (Silverman, 2007: 58, my emphasis). The open, participatory format of these group discussions meant that they generated information in the 'public' domain, suggesting that while some of the issues were openly debated, other information or (more contested) points of view may not have been revealed. As Brockington and Sullivan (2003) caution, the value of the information produced 'will only become apparent by revisiting it and the people who produced it, in different, less public, circumstances' (60). The individual interviews and life histories provide a means of validating or contradicting this information (and vice versa).

The group discussions, which lasted between 40 and 80 minutes, were recorded simultaneously using two Dictaphones, translated and transcribed in English by the two researchers (working together) and submitted in hard copy and electronic format to UCM on 22nd September 2005.

5.4.3 Maputo, Mozambique: Exploring the Woodcarving Chain/Gathering Survey Data, April 2008

In the context of the research, the short visit to Maputo in April 2008 (linked to conference attendance in Johannesburg) had a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it offered the opportunity to gather information on key aspects of the Makonde woodcarving (value-) chain in Mozambique through fieldwork with craft market vendors and street traders in Maputo, coupled with discussions with key informants (the President of a local carving cooperative, ASSEMA, and the owner of a small craft enterprise)¹⁴³. Secondly, it allowed me to obtain national survey data, disaggregated to individual household level, directly from Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE) to act as a comparator to my own carver survey data. I was also able to discuss aspects of survey methodology directly with INE staff¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴³. Interview Note, 4th April 2008 and Visit Note, 5th April 2008. My time in Maputo also included a visit to the National Art Museum (see Visit Note, 3rd April 2008).

¹⁴⁴ Data was supplied by Virgulino Nhate and Claudio Massingarela, with a guide to IAF and IFTRAB data provided by Christoffer Sonne-Schmidt. I visited the INE offices at Av. Sekou Toure No. 21, Maputo on several occasions between the 1st and 3rd April.

Research on the woodcarving 'chain' included a visit to the weekly (Saturday morning) open-air craft market at Praça 25 do Junho on 5th April, discussions with street traders in several locations around the junction of Av 24 de Julho and Av Julius Nyerere between 1st and 3rd April, and an interview at the ASSEMA woodcarving association (located behind the National Art Museum) on the 4th April. On the day of my visit to the craft market, to which I was accompanied by a locally-based key informant, a range of woodcarvings, wooden boxes, clothes and jewellery were on offer. The majority of the Makonde woodcarvings on display were *maasai* and busts, with a small selection of *ujamaa*, but noticeably few *shetani*. Most of the carvings were fine-sanded and highly polished, but some (mainly *ujamaa* and *shetani*) were rough and unfinished¹⁴⁵. Information about the woodcarvings on display and the sales (and negotiated/transacted) prices of several of them available at the craft market (and from street traders) was recorded. My intention was to compare these with similar items available in Cabo Delgado (see Chapter 6). One item – a 30cm hollow *ujamaa* made from brown *mpingo*¹⁴⁶ reportedly produced in Mueda district, Cabo Delgado with the name of the carver ('Nkavandame') on the bottom of the plinth – was purchased by the researcher. The item was to form the basis of my attempt to 'reverse' the 'chain' by identifying the perceived value of the carving at different 'nodes' and ultimately by seeking out its maker (see Chapter 7 for the outcome of this exercise).

There is clearly the need for caution when using information on price and the provenance of carvings gathered in this way. As I recorded in my field notes at the time, '(V)endors (none of whom were Makonde) tended to be evasive, at best, if not mendacious' (05/04/2008). The fact that we were European (even though my companion was a long-time and very knowledgeable resident of Maputo), and therefore

¹⁴⁵ An explanation of the range of styles and genres of sculptures currently being produced by the Makonde was given in Chapter 2 (Section 2.1). The sale of unfinished items might suggest that these had been sourced (directly or indirectly) from woodcarvers who did not have the means to sand these properly (using sandpaper), despite the significant added value this procedure would generate. An alternative interpretation was that they were left deliberately unfinished to signify their handmade quality or 'authenticity' (again, see discussion in Chapter 3), but this seems less likely.

¹⁴⁶ The colour of the *mpingo* 'heartwood' varies from black through purplish-brown to brown, with the paler wood (possibly the result of faster growth) being less dense (Jenkins et al, 2002). There has been a tendency for sculptures made from paler wood to be artificially darkened using shoe polish because of the perception that this adds to their commercial value (see discussion in Chapter 6).

part of the 'core market' for these carvings, was clearly pertinent here. The expectation of 'objectivity' on the part of any respondent is unnecessarily restrictive, if not impossible, and cognisance of the circumstances in which this data was obtained (and the likely motives of the vendor) is useful contextual information. Some 'cross-checking' using the outcomes of discussions at the ASSEMA the previous day was also possible.

Two individual and household data sets were made available by INE, the Second National Income/Expenditure/Household survey or IAF (2002/2003) and the Labour Force Survey or INTRAB (2004/2005). Although summary results for both were already publicly available at the time (together with a breakdown and analysis at Provincial level, see INE, 2004 and INE, 2006, respectively) possession of the data sets made disaggregation to household level possible. This permitted a comparison of the individual and household characteristics and assets of the general population with that of woodcarvers. It also obviated the need, particularly given resource and logistical constraints, for me to conduct my own survey of non-carver households (planned as part of the original research strategy). The design of my own household questionnaire had been framed with the hope of this eventuality in mind.

The 2002/2003 IAF survey (which took place between July 2002 and June 2003) used a multi-stage stratified and clustered random sample of 8,700 households (derived from the results of the 1997 population census). There were major concerns with the methodology adopted in the 2002/2003 IAF survey (discussed in Chapter 4). My intended focus however was on household characteristics and 'assets' as indicators of poverty, rather than income/consumption measures and poverty 'lines', making the use of IAF data less contentious.

The 2004/2005 IFTRAB survey (the first national labour market survey of its kind in Mozambique) was based on a stratified and clustered random sample, of 17,560 households countrywide (again based on the results of the 1997 census). Data was collected between October 2004 and September 2005, making it closely contemporaneous with my own household survey. At Provincial level, 1,720 households

were interviewed in Cabo Delgado, 600 of which were urban and 1,120 rural. The urban/rural distribution of the sample (at 35%/65%) was different from that of the IAF 2002/2003, but was more closely in line with my sample's characteristics.

5.4.4 Mozambique, Phase 3: Carver Life Histories, May 2010

I returned to Northern Mozambique in May 2010¹⁴⁷. The close to five-year gap between Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the fieldwork, although unintended, did not prove unduly problematic. Indeed, the longer term perspective it offered – and the possibility of separating cyclical variability from more fundamental patterns of change in carver livelihoods – I would argue helped to avoid the 'a-historicism' that can undermine short-duration ethnographic investigation (Hammersley, 2008). Further, I believe that the research method adopted in this phase, life histories, 'offer the advantage of a long term perspective...and can be very helpful in explaining observed changes in ways that survey data cannot (Baulch and Scott, 2006: 29). Life histories give 'voice' to individuals and to stories that may have been lost or never have been told; they have the potential to 'make links across life phases and cohort generations revealing historical shifts in a culture' (Plummer, 2001: 395). In this way they help establish 'collective memories' and 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983), or 'avenues to reliable information about a collective past'. (Kvale, 2007: 71).

There had been changes to the research 'team', however. Daniel Mwanga had sadly died in early 2007, his death reported to me by Severo Mpacocha in an email/SMS and later confirmed by Lesley. By 2008, both Severo and Richard had graduated from UCM and were in the workplace. Despite his keenness to be involved, Richard (in early 2010) was appointed to the post of Permanent Secretary to the Governor of Niassa province

¹⁴⁷ In the original fieldwork plan, I had scheduled the third phase of research in Northern Mozambique to take place 12-18 months after the initial visit (ie in 2006 or 2007). In the event, workplace demands (and lack of funding) made it impossible to spare the time until much later, although the short visit to Maputo in April 2008 proved useful in several respects, not least in terms of enabling me to keep in touch with the 'field'. I had also maintained regular contact with Cabo Delgado via my involvement as a trustee with MERRY, which from 2005 onwards had supported 'cultural activities' through the Cultural Activities Project (CAP) administered by Helvetas, Mozambique (see for instance, Kruspan, 2010).

and had moved with his family to Lichinga. Severo, however, was available and still living in Pemba and his involvement offered continuity to the research. His innate understanding of the broader developments affecting the Makonde woodcarvers, or what Francis (1992: 93) calls ‘the context of constraints and opportunities within which people have acted’, proved invaluable for the conduct of the research in this phase and for the interpretation of the life histories.

The final three-week phase (Phase 3) of the empirical research focused on the collection of life histories of a sub-group of carvers drawn from the 2005 household survey¹⁴⁸. My intention, prior to entering the ‘field’, was to select informants purposively. Analysis of Phase 2 fieldwork data (including individual carver and household characteristics, migration patterns, asset ownership and relationship to fellow carvers) identified a number of individuals who were ‘different’ or ‘exemplifying cases’ or prototypes in some respect, in the sense that their inclusion would help capture variations in social and economic experience. In practice, informant non-availability at carving sites either temporarily (due to absence at *shambas* or other employment) or permanently (due to bereavement) meant on some occasions I was forced to choose whichever (qualified) individuals were present¹⁴⁹.

Sixteen (usable) semi-structured life history interviews were completed between 13th and 24th May, each lasting up to an hour. A briefing meeting was held prior to the first interview on 13th May. Although Severo had significant experience and awareness of ‘conventional’ interview techniques, he was initially unfamiliar with the particularities of the life history approach and the requirements of a life history interviewer. In order to help prepare him for the role I held a ‘mock’ life history interview, with Severo as the subject. This enabled me to run through a sequence of questions with different foci - from closed /‘factual’/innocuous to open/‘contentious’/sensitive – and to demonstrate the

¹⁴⁸ Two of the carvers interviewed (and two others in my household survey) also have biographies in Kacimi and Sulger (2004), offering a useful cross-reference.

¹⁴⁹ Given that life history research does not aim at generalisation, ‘convenience sampling’ like this does not undermine reliability. Conversely, as Francis (1992) emphasises, using a ‘statistically derived sample’ for selecting life history informants is not appropriate as some key individuals would not have been picked.

need for interviewer flexibility to respond to the unexpected. The interview was also recorded to test the operation of the recording equipment and resulting sound clarity. We then ran through specific themes and issues (many of which had emerged during the 2005 Group Interviews, in which Severo participated). Later that morning, four interviews were conducted with carvers at the Karibu Wimbe Cooperative, none of whom had participated in the 2005 household survey, but who happened to be available. The interviews proved to be too short (at about 20 minutes) and with only one resulting in a recording of acceptable quality. The transcriptions produced by Severo that evening, as I suspected (and he recognised), showed the interviews to be too superficial, too tightly-structured and with too many 'leading questions'. Nevertheless, despite these problems, the exercise was useful as a life history 'pilot' from which Severo was able to learn¹⁵⁰.

Five life history interviews were completed in Pemba before our departure for Mueda. Apart from Karibu Wimbe, which appeared to have been in decline since the Cooperative's President, Daniel Mwanga's death in 2007, the two other carving cooperatives (Bela Baia and Mpingo) seemed on the surface at least to be functioning reasonably well. The individuals identified in my 'purposive' sampling were either immediately available at the carving sites, or could be relied upon to be available the following day in response to my requests. In Mueda town and surrounding villages, however, respondent accessibility was much more restricted. The approach adopted in the site visits was therefore necessarily varied and flexible, depending on carver availability; in several cases (in Miula, Mpeme and Mueda), we were unable to locate one or more of the carving groups visited in 2005. In several instances, therefore, the carver life histories we collected had to be based on a variant of 'convenience sampling'. At one site (Idovo), the choice of respondents was 'negotiated' with the village President – who himself was a carver and one of those purposively selected by me prior to entering the field!

¹⁵⁰ After my return to London, Severo informed me by email (12th June 2010) that he had repeated the first interviews with carvers at Karibu Wimbe and Mpingo Cooperatives in Pemba 'for consistency'.

The preferred approach (adopted in the majority of visits) was to meet with all carvers present to explain the purpose of the fieldwork. The circulation of photographs taken in July 2005 proved useful here. The photographs inevitably provoked laughter and discussion as individuals were recognised and, in so doing, they helped to re-establish links and legitimise my research credentials. The images also provide a visual anchor (for all of us) helping to document changes that had occurred in peoples' lives or in the surrounding community and often elicited comments to this effect. Here we can see both 'participant as observer' and 'observer as participant' (Gold, 1958, cited in Cohen et al, 2000) in play. Occasionally, the images prompted memories of carvers who had died. Several of the carvers were still using chisels I had distributed as gifts in 2005, which provided a further link between us. Requests for life history interviews were never refused.

The life history interviews were conducted in private, close to the carving site in urban settings, but adjacent to carver dwellings in the villages. The latter permitted observation of the physical, as well as interactional, setting, documented through field notes and photographs. The interviews were conducted in chiMakonde and were semi-structured, based on a pre-determined sequence of 'themes', but offering scope for the respondent to develop their own 'narrative' direction. It was apparent that the ability for individuals to reflect on their own experience, particularly in the rather abstract way demanded by the interview, varied greatly and often required prompting and guidance. The life histories were recorded using a Digital Voice Recorder, supplemented by written observations made by me. While recording interviews guarantees complete coverage, this has to be balanced against possible problems of reactivity on the part of the respondent. Permission was always obtained prior to the interview and audio recording was undertaken discreetly. The recordings were saved on computer (with a back-up copy made by me) the same day. Following the end of the process, the life history interviews were translated and transcribed into English by Severo and submitted in hard copy and electronic format to Helvetas Mozambique in Pemba in mid-July 2010 and then forwarded on to me.

5.5 Constructing the data

During the research process, data ‘construction’ occurs in three steps (Mikkelsen, 2005: 160). Firstly, in the selection of information, secondly, through the categorisation and summarisation of data, and, thirdly, the stage when data is subjected to systematic investigation and analysis. Here I critically reflect on the research process, including issues of validity and reliability, on the quantity and quality of data generated and on my approach to data analysis, recognising that the main interpretation and theorising of fieldwork data is presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

5.5.1 The Research Setting

The setting for the empirical research – in terms of the accessibility of the field site (both logistically and financially) and adequate access to ‘respondents’ – in part determined by prior personal contact, proved appropriate in terms of the scope it provided for learning about carver lives and livelihoods. The five-year period spanned by the empirical investigation (April 2005-May 2010), although encompassing a number of discrete short-duration fieldwork episodes, also demonstrated (not least through the death or migration of some respondents) the ‘time-bound’ nature of much micro-level research in developing countries. This illustrates the problems inherent in ‘one-off’ snapshot surveys which are common in ‘livelihood approach’ research.

My concern so far has been with establishing the rationale for the research methods adopted and with documenting the research process that I have followed in order to demonstrate that I have shown full transparency and appropriate “critical reflexivity” (Brockington and Sullivan, 2003). I recognise that the meanings I have attached to the field site (and to the participants) are ‘subjective’ and have in part been ‘invented’ and recast in the process of writing. Indeed, as Cupples and Kindon (2003) emphasise, there is a growing recognition of the value of research that critically and transparently accounts for the conditions in which it was produced because it is more convincing if the limitations (as well as successes) are made explicit. I am also concerned with showing

‘methodological awareness’ (Seale, 1999), that is, revealing to the ‘audience’ of the research as much as possible about the steps taken and evidence obtained that has led to particular conclusions, in order to establish the rigour of my approach. Here I take rigour to mean ensuring that ‘the entire research process is systematically linked to the research questions and the entire research process is transparent’ (Sumner & Tribe, 2008: 117). In Table 8, below, I map the research methods against the research questions. While the time-frame over which the fieldwork was undertaken was longer than originally envisaged, the range and sequencing of research methods remained largely as planned¹⁵¹.

The issue of ‘rigour’ in research is also inextricably linked to questions of ‘ethics’, which, in development interventions perhaps more so than in others, pervade the whole of the research process. Cultural differences – between researcher (or tourist) and respondents – have been heightened in terms of woodcarving (as both process and art/artefact) because of the significance of perceptions of the ‘Other’ in discourses on cultural production (see Chapter 3). Cultural conceptions of ‘value’ (and price), for instance, also proved to be very different, sometimes exacerbated by linguistic differences¹⁵².

In addition to being mindful of issues of validity and reliability, a researcher needs to be ‘context-sensitive, honest and ‘up front’ about his/her interests’ (Brydon, 2006: 28). The narrative description of my research ‘journey’ was provided in an attempt to reveal something of my prior assumptions and the subjectivity that I brought to the research process. For the current research any ethical concerns have been complicated by my role as a representative of a small charity supporting cultural projects in Cabo Delgado (see Section 3, above). However, the scale of support provided has been relatively small, limited to the three carving groups in Pemba and was channelled through local intermediaries (Helvetas and Arte Maconde Ida) which made the link rather opaque.

¹⁵¹ The exception was that the original research plan called for household interviews with representative non-carver households. The availability of disaggregated national survey data from INE obviated the requirement for this and was actually preferable because a *small* sample of non-carvers would have been less effective as a ‘context comparator’ than a representative national survey.

¹⁵² See, for instance, the comments by MN (Life History Interview, May 2010), reported in Chapter 7.

Consequently, I do not believe that this affected either the reliability of information gathered or the selection of participants.

The issue of language ability, specifically my very rudimentary knowledge of Portuguese and almost complete lack of familiarity with chiMakonde, was problematic. This meant that access to secondary sources in Portuguese required very painstaking translation by me or assistance from Portuguese-speaking students at my University, as necessary. In terms of primary research, the use of tri-lingual research assistants (chiMakonde-Portuguese-English) operated quite well, but I recognise that this could potentially raise concerns about the reliability and consistency of some of the data. It also meant that many of the nuances, particularly in informal conversations, may not have been fully captured, which is a very common constraint in development studies research (Bujra, 2006). A similar concern is raised by Mikkelsen (2005: 343), for whom 'the language barrier itself creates an uneven relationship, to the disadvantage of the analyst and the validity of information'. Some of the ways in which I have dealt with this issue have been set out earlier. These included the use of structured questionnaires, two research assistants working in parallel on transcribing group discussions and the recording of life history interviews (in chiMakonde) using a digital voice recorder. A subset of the life history interviews were then independently transcribed and checked for accuracy and consistency using a UK-based chiMakonde speaker.

5.5.2 Judging Quality in Mixed Methods Research

Inherent in the 'mixed methods' research strategy that I have chosen for this study (and the 'triangulation' it appears to facilitate) was an implicit concern with validity and reliability. Mixed methods research inevitably involves working with different types of data. My fieldwork generated both quantitative and qualitative data, thus making judgements on the quality or rigour of both the research process and outcomes more complicated, rather than more straightforward. Indeed, as Silverman (2005: 122) cautions, 'it should not be naively presumed that combining methods and aggregating data leads to an overall truth, or to a more complete picture, or to increased validity'.

One approach is to broaden out what is meant by ‘validity’¹⁵³. Validity (in social scientific terms) means whether the method(s) adopted investigate what they purport to investigate (Kvale, 2007) and that the techniques have been properly applied (White, 2002). In a narrowly (quantitative) positivistic sense validity is associated purely with measurement (in numbers) of an observable reality; in a broader conception, validity could also pertain to how far what we observe (and record) reflects or represents the phenomena we are interested in. In other words, validity becomes the extent to which an account is an accurate representation of the social phenomena that it claims to depict. How can this be judged? In qualitative research, this relates to how well the empirical research is located in or related to the broader (theoretical) context. In terms of qualitative *data* I have been aiming to demonstrate ‘acceptable honesty’ in the way that findings are presented, in the depth, richness and scope of data, in the selection and range of participants and some attempt at triangulation (Cohen et al, 2000: 105). This is clearly not just a concern in qualitative approaches, however. While it may be more straightforward to justify the validity of quantitative *data* – by reference to sampling procedures and accurate recording – ensuring researcher objectivity in the *interpretation* and analysis of this data is clearly always an issue.

5.5.3 Data Construction

Household Survey

The process adopted to create an appropriate sampling frame and the rationale for using a ‘purposive-sampling’ method was set out in Section 4.2. While this sampling method ensures that the most relevant and reliable respondents are included, I also recognise possible biases related to coverage and representativeness of the sample¹⁵⁴. The quantitative element of the questionnaire (Sections A, C and D, see Table 6) mirrored the format of questions used in national household surveys in Mozambique (for instance the IAF 2002/2003) and was designed to allow ease of data recording, comparison and analysis, and to permit some check on similarity or otherwise with the

¹⁵³ Silverman (2000) suggests that ‘validity’ can be substituted by the word ‘truth’ or that synonyms might include ‘trustworthiness’, ‘credibility’ or ‘fittingness’.

¹⁵⁴ See Oya (2006) which discusses *inter alia* the advantages and disadvantages of purposive sampling.

broader population. The resulting data (derived from 61 useable questionnaires, covering 354 household members and containing some 120 variables) was coded and entered onto Excel and SPSS in London by the researcher and a temporary research assistant, a Development Management Masters student at the University of Westminster. An initial exploratory analysis examined frequency distributions, means, dispersion, and cross-tabulations using both individual and household characteristics and assets and was intended to categorise carver households across a number of dimensions, thus enabling a review of differences between carvers in the entire sample and between rural/urban carving groups¹⁵⁵, the findings from which are discussed at length in Chapter 6. This permitted an appreciation of the diversity of the sample and later comparison with provincial (rural/urban) data from Mozambican national household surveys. Although there can be issues with the reliability of secondary data used in development research (see the discussion in Sumner and Tribe, 2008) the quality of INE data (in terms of survey methodology and recording of household assets and living conditions, rather than consumption-expenditure data) appears acceptable for this research and the data is largely contemporaneous (see Section 4.3, above).

The ultimate aim was to generate an 'asset index' as an indicator of 'poverty' and a 'wealth ranking' of carvers. In Chapter 6 I discuss the construction of weighted poverty or asset indices (where the weighting is fixed or flexible) as a means of exploring poverty and deprivation and examining the similarities and differences between carver households, in the absence of reliable information on income or consumption. I recognise that 'asset indices' are not free of the 'reporting bias' that pervades household surveys, although direct observation of some 'assets' (related to housing quality and sanitation, for instance) was clearly possible. Arguably, also, measurement error is likely to be much smaller with assets than with food consumption, for instance. I have also grappled with questions of validity (or truthfulness or inclusiveness) related to the choice

¹⁵⁵ Data manipulation also included an exploratory factor analysis (or Principal Component Analysis) using SPSS, in order to identify whether there were a limited number of variables which could be used as a proxy for capturing poverty amongst carver households (and to help inform the construction of an appropriate poverty 'index'). The procedure met with limited success due to relatively small sample size (see Field, 2005).

of assets to be included in the 'index' and the meaning this might have for the subjects of the research, as well as for the researcher (see Chapter 6, Section 2.2).

Group Discussions

I have already discussed at some length the staging and data collection issues related to the group discussions (Section 4.2) and possible method-specific and situational bias. The discussions, conducted without exception in chiMakonde, were recorded using two Dictaphones and jointly transcribed by the research assistants¹⁵⁶. This offered a degree of 'investigator triangulation' and the availability of transcripts (already translated into English, not verbatim, unfortunately) and contextual field notes provided what Seale (1999) calls 'low-inference descriptors' to aid transparency. My very limited familiarity with chiMakonde and therefore the need for translation meant a potentially wide difference between 'intended and received' meaning, in terms of language, delivery and emphasis. The thirteen transcribed group discussions ran to just over 18,000 words. Although most followed a similar structure and sequencing of 'topics', there was also scope for what was labelled 'Open Questions/Responses', where participants were at liberty to raise any issues of personal concern or interest. All contributors were asked to preface any statement with their name, which facilitated attribution. In addition, initial information on the organisational structure of the carving cooperatives or associations and named 'office holders' permitted some analysis of power dynamics and the relative contribution of various participants.

As Patton (1990: 381) points out, there is no 'right way' to organise, analyse or interpret qualitative data. As always, the approach to adopt depends on the purpose of the analysis, often relying to some extent on 'creative insights' (Mikkelsen, 2005: 181), but in order to organise, analyse and construct meaning from this quantity of qualitative data some condensation was essential. The data was first coded according to various 'themes' (see Table 7, below) linked to the research questions, and then selectively

¹⁵⁶ Unfortunately, once transcribed the recordings were either deleted or the tapes used again for later group discussions, meaning no original 'verbatim' copy exists. The availability of a digital voice recorder for the life histories overcame this problem through allowing the recordings to be saved directly on my computer.

transferred to a tabular matrix (with research questions as column headings and carving groups/individuals as rows); data from field notes and individual questionnaires were added later. The aim was firstly to build a coherent body of evidence to explore the research questions, and secondly to record and present common aspects of the carver 'voice'.

Table 7: Themes for Coding Group Discussion Data

1. Commodification of Culture (Carving styles/development)
2. Woodcarving and poverty
3. Access to markets/Tourist Market
4. Barriers to entry (apprenticeship/kinship/cost)
5. Organisation/Stratification (within Coop/Association)
6. Gender relations
7. Access to raw materials/tools
8. 'Historical/cultural' origins of carving
9. Attitudes to government

Life Histories

Sixteen life histories (or biographical interviews) were recorded in the final phase of fieldwork in May 2010, representing about a quarter of the respondents in the original household survey of 2005. The basis of selection, including an imposed element of 'convenience sampling' was discussed earlier (Section 4.4). The transcriptions ran to over sixty pages of text, or about 17,000 words¹⁵⁷. These life histories are not objective, but present a subjective view of the past. They are inevitably selective in terms of what is included and what is excluded. As Plummer (2001: 400) emphasises, most researchers who use life history methods 'no longer believe a simple, linear or essential, real truth can be gleaned through a life story'. This makes evaluating their 'validity' or reliability incredibly difficult. Apart from internal consistency, it is possible to look for correspondence with the accounts of other informants, other written sources, or with

¹⁵⁷ A sub-set of the digital recordings were sent to a UK-based Makonde speaker in the autumn of 2010, who had been identified by the Mozambican High Commission in London in response to my written request.

external events (see Chapter 7). However, it is the idea of life story as ‘rhetoric’ that is as important here. The value in this research is derived from demonstrating how individuals (in contrasting ways) make sense of their past, placing their individual experience in its wider social or cultural context.

5.5.4 The Research Process: a reflection

The strengths of any research process can be judged in terms of how well it has addressed the needs of the research questions. On this measure the ‘mixed methods’ approach adopted in this study, which combines quantitative and qualitative components, within a multi-visit, (five-year) longitudinal framework appears to have been successful. My approach has had to be pragmatic, adapting to unavoidable logistical constraints which affected the timing of access to the field. However, the field research (combined with secondary sources) has ultimately facilitated the collection of an original and rich dataset encompassing the poverty characteristics of Makonde carver households in Cabo Delgado, individual carver livelihood trajectories, carver social networks and the interface between the woodcarvers and the marketplace.

The choice of theoretical or conceptual framework (political economy and more specifically the ‘systems of provision approach’) was crucial here as it helped define the methodological choices (Sumner and Tribe, 2008). Conceptualising Makonde woodcarving as a unique ‘system of provision’ meant the need to explore both the ‘horizontal’ or contextual aspects of carver livelihoods (looking beyond household characteristics to consider wider social relations, class and historical contingency) and the distinct ‘vertical’ dimensions of the woodcarving ‘chain’ (and its changing dynamics).

I have been cognisant that during the research process the researcher inevitably imposes his/her own framework or meaning on the data in terms of initial selection of respondents, in deciding ‘whose voice is heard and who is silent’ (Kvale, 2007) and through their interpretation of the research environment which informs it. In order to counter this, I have used selected quotations from individuals themselves at various

points in the empirical analysis that follows in Chapters 6 and 7, generally reproduced verbatim, as well as observations from field notes (referenced with location and date). In this way I hope to capture, however imperfectly and incompletely, both the voices of informants and the setting in which this research has been conducted.

Table 8: Research/Fieldwork Plan (2005-2010)

Research Themes	Research Questions	Research Methods
Structural (household) characteristics of carvers; comparison with neighbours - is being a carver 'different'?	<p>What evidence is there of stratification and differentiation within carving groups and between individual carvers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) What are the economic, social and cultural characteristics of individuals who rely wholly or partly on woodcarving as an income-earning or survival activity? (eg demography, age, education etc) (ii) How stratified are carver households (both within and between carving groups)? (iii) Are carvers poorer or wealthier than their neighbours? 	<p>Individual (household) questionnaires, containing standardised open-ended and closed quantitative questions (as lead method). (i),(ii),(iii). Own and fieldworker observations.(i), (ii), (iii). Comparison with disaggregated national survey evidence (eg IAF) (iii)</p>
Livelihood 'trajectories' followed by the carvers sources of differentiation; the role and importance of carver social networks.	<p>How can the livelihood trajectories of contemporary Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado be conceptualised?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) How do the carvers themselves describe their livelihoods? (ii) What has been the role of history, cultural 'tradition', contingent events and government policies in shaping individual livelihoods and carver social networks? (iii) What evidence is there of livelihood 'diversification' (ie to what extent do carvers pursue different forms of income generation)? (iv) In terms of survival or accumulation do the carvers draw on the resources of carver social networks (cooperatives or associations)? (v) What are the barriers to entry into carving? How far do these relate to skills acquisition, social networks, contingent events etc? 	<p>Individual (household) questionnaires. (i),(iii),(v). Group discussions (within cooperative/associations) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) Discussion with key informants (ii), (iii) (v). Life histories/biographical interviews. (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v).</p>
Identifying the woodcarving 'chain' and the place of carvers within it; woodcarvings as commodity and cultural product.	<p>What evidence is there of the growing commodification of Makonde sculpture and what has been the impact of the development of artisanal markets on the livelihood opportunities of the woodcarvers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) How has the market for carvings evolved as a 'system of provision' in terms of both 'vertical' (market links and intermediaries) and 'horizontal' dimensions (carver social networks and 'place')? (ii) How are woodcarvings, as a 'cultural product', valued? (iii) What evidence is there of changes in woodcarving styles and production techniques in response to the growth in tourism and broader market developments? 	<p>Discussion with key informants (i). Responses to open questions in individual questionnaires. (i), (ii), (iii). Group discussions. (i), (iii). Life histories/biographical interviews (i),(ii), (iii).</p>

Table 9: Woodcarver Survey, 2005: Enumeration and Sampling Frame

Location/Organisation	Number of Carvers Phase I (April)	Number of Carvers Phase II (July)	Sample Size (%)	Number in Group Discussion	Date of Group Discussion
<i>Pemba City</i>					
Cooperative Karibu Wimbe	10	13	7	13	13 th August
Sociedad Arte Makonde Bela Baia	35	32	7	21	9 th July
Cooperativa Mpingo	30	23	6	23	27 th July
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>75 (45%)</i>	<i>68 (35%)</i>	<i>20 (33%)</i>		
<i>Pemba District</i>					
Walupwana village (Metuge)	3	6	5	6	28 th July
Mieze (Cooperative Makonde Art/1 st May)	6	3	3	3	28 th July
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>9 (5%)</i>	<i>9 (5%)</i>	<i>8 (13%)</i>		
<i>Mueda Town</i>					
Cooperative Chibiliti	14	20	4	20	16 th July
Association Artcentre Makonde Livambwe	6	2	2	2	17 th July
Mueda Cooperative	10	0?	0	na	na
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>30 (18%)</i>	<i>22 (11%)</i>	<i>6 (10%)</i>		
<i>Mueda District</i>					
Association Makundu Street/Rovuma (Miula)	12	10	4	10	14 th July
Association Eduardo Mondlane (Miula)	9	12	2	12	15 th July
Association Combatentes Aldeia (Nandimba)	4	31	6	21	16 th July
Association Shulumu (Mpeme)	14	11	4	11	18 th July
Association Arte Makonde (Mpeme)	5	6	4	6	18 th July
Idovo village (individual carvers)	7	25	7	25	12 th July
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>51 (31%)</i>	<i>95 (49%)</i>	<i>27 (44%)</i>		
TOTAL	165	194	61		

Source: Author's Field Notes (April 2005, July 2005); Group Discussion Report (September 2005).

Chapter 6: The Woodcarving ‘Chain’, Carver Households and Livelihood Diversification

6.1 Mapping the Makonde Woodcarving ‘Chain’ in Mozambique

As Chapter 2 emphasised, the ‘commodity chain’ literature is a large and contested one and increasingly open to multiple interpretations. This reflects both its historical roots – which range from ‘world systems’ approaches and dependency theory on one side to the industrial economics of Porter’s ‘value chain’ analysis on the other – and its methodological evolution. For researchers this has involved an intellectual journey taking in an initial concern (in the mid-1990s) with chain configuration, identifying general typologies (what or who ‘drives’ particular chains), to a focus on the possibilities for individual actors to ‘upgrade’ or improve their position in the chain and, finally, over the last few years, to an analysis of ‘governance’ based on key ‘firms’ or actors and their links with immediate ‘first-tier’ suppliers. This recent narrowing down in focus has been a source of concern, even for some of its key proponents, and certainly limits its explanatory power in the current study. Of closer relevance (what I have termed the development ‘turn’ in GCC/GVC) has been the emphasis on practical ‘value chain analyses’ (VCA) of individual commodities (goods or services) or sectors in specific locations, increasingly with an intended explicit ‘pro-poor’ focus. This has involved a welcome shift of attention away from the ‘ideal-type’ to the commodity-specific, but has tended to privilege production over consumption and to focus on issues of market access and operation. These VCA have also downplayed the importance of dynamic cultural, historical and social forces underlying the production and consumption of individual commodities, which the ‘systems of provision’ (sops) approach highlights and without which an understanding of contemporary carver livelihoods would be incomplete.

At a basic level, a commodity ‘chain’ is a useful framework or analytical ‘tool’ for describing the stages (and nodes) involved in the transformation (or trajectory) of a product from its conception and raw material origins, through production to final

consumption (see Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001, for instance). However, this deceptively simple framework – which emphasises the linearity of any chain – belies their underlying complexity and uniqueness. According to Hartwick's (1998: 425, my emphasis) early but broader conceptualisation, commodity chains consist of 'significant production, distribution and consumption nodes, and the connecting links between them, together with *social, cultural and natural conditions* involved in commodity movements'. As argued in Chapter 2, in this formulation, which is extended in the work of Fine on 'systems of provision' (2002), the importance of incorporating the 'horizontal' dimensions of the chain ('place' or location, social relations, and historical and environmental contingency) becomes apparent. In the Makonde woodcarving chain, local, naturally available raw material (African 'blackwood') is transformed, within contingent cultural and economic systems of production (and consumption), into a commodity which is traded internationally. The historical circumstances within which the 'chain' evolved (outlined in Chapter 2, and discussed further below) had a crucial bearing on its development and on its contemporary form.

The first stage in mapping a chain is defining its boundaries and extent, recognising that this will inevitably be an abstraction from reality, with the danger too that the 'chain' becomes artificially reified. First of all, is it possible to identify a unique Makonde woodcarving chain? Given the ubiquity, wide geographic range and differing economic conditions under which 'Makonde' carvings are produced, this is certainly not a straightforward exercise and perhaps one of the inevitable outcomes of 'commodification' and the globalisation of the woodcarving chain. Many African blackwood carvings sold in Nairobi, Johannesburg, Dar Es Salaam or even Maputo may not have been produced by Makonde sculptors, even if sold as such (West and Malugu, 2003). Indeed, carvings may even have been made from different wood treated to mimic African blackwood. Further, as Molony (2005) points out during his discussion of the African blackwood 'market' chain in Tanzania, not only might carvings be produced by other ethnic groups, but the 'themes' found in retail outlets may not be 'those traditionally associated

with the Makonde, or styles that were originally designed by carvers of Makonde heritage' (fn: 192). He consequently prefers to use *vinyago* as a collective term for African blackwood carvings.

To make the process analytically tractable I place specific emphasis on African blackwood (*mpingo*) sculptures produced by Makonde carvers living and working in Cabo Delgado province. Although this 'chain' appears essentially regional in scope it is/has been configured by a global 'dynamic'. Secondly, whilst specifying the 'chain' in this way and identifying as far as I can its unique features, I recognise that it parallels and at points intersects with several other 'chains', illustrating some of the problems with defining 'boundaries' – a Mozambican 'tourist' chain (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), a timber 'chain' of which the trade in African blackwood is a part (Chapter 4 and below), as well as a separate *mpingo*/Makonde carving chain centred on Dar es Salaam (Chapter 2) – all with their own distinct logic and dynamic. The Makonde woodcarvers in northern Mozambique are 'actors' in all of these chains, whether as sellers, consumers or through migration and cultural linkage.

There are conventionally four broad stages in conducting a practical 'value chain analysis' for any commodity (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001); where these have an explicit 'pro-poor' focus, more emphasis is placed on participatory methodologies (see for instance Mitchell et al, 2009a). Firstly, the need to systematically map the stages/'actors', their characteristics, linkages and the flow of the commodity through the chain; secondly, identifying the nature of participation in the chain and the distribution of benefits to 'actors'; thirdly, examining the potential scope for 'upgrading' in the chain, for instance through quality improvements or certification, and the presence of entry barriers, and; finally, analysing the role of 'governance' – where power lies, the scope for coordinated action (or collective agency) – and possible policy interventions. As outlined in Chapter 5, I have used a combination of research methods in the empirical study (household survey,

group discussions, informal interviews and secondary methods) which help to build up a picture of the woodcarving 'chain' in its various dimensions.

The woodcarving 'chain' is certainly short – with relatively few stages and participants – but the activities and connections that constitute it can be viewed as a similarly unique, 'system of provision', with its own integral unity, as that of more complex and seemingly 'sophisticated' commodities or products. The bulk of early case studies applying the GCC/GVC approach focused on manufactures (apparel, electronics or automobiles), with global production networks, and where either branding and market access or control of technology and economies of scale were key 'chain drivers'. The approach was later broadened out to encompass case studies on supermarkets/international retailing, primary commodities (tea, cotton, fresh fruit and cashews, among others), wood furniture, other NTFPs and services (like tourism)¹⁵⁸. In terms of complexity – the number of stages or degree of processing – the woodcarving 'chain' is closer to that of primary commodities or NTFPs, with fewer 'nodes'. However, it clearly differs in two respects; firstly, due to the high share of value added by the carvers themselves and secondly, because of the greater proportion of 'direct' sales to final consumers (visiting tourists).

It is common to define four or five main stages in the woodcarving process (Figure 2)¹⁵⁹. The first involves harvesting, gathering or purchasing the wood and transporting it to the market or carving site; the second stage involves carving the wood into its final physical form; the third stage comprises finishing (using sandpaper and/or polish); the final stages involve the actual selling of the carving – which could be based on a direct sale between carver and final customer – or which may comprise several transactions involving intermediate traders and

¹⁵⁸ For references, see Chapter 2 and 3. The individual product or value chain analyses conducted for NTFPs (see Marshall et al, 2005) and 'pro-poor' tourism (Mitchell and Ashley, 2009) tend to be much more narrowly focused geographically than the original GCCs conducted in the 1990s (see, for instance, Gereffi et al, 1994).

¹⁵⁹ See, for instance, Standa-Gunda and Braedt (2005), as part of their analysis of woodcraft markets in Southern Zimbabwe.

retailers. The 'chain' may only involve two participants – the carver or carver enterprise which harvests, prepares, carves and finishes the sculpture, and the passing tourist or local who buys it – or many.

6.1.1 Raw Material Supply

The vast majority of contemporary Makonde carvings in Northern Mozambique are produced from African blackwood or ebony (*Dalbergia melanoxylon* in Latin, *mpingo* in Swahili, pau preto in Portuguese)¹⁶⁰. African blackwood, found extensively in sub-Saharan Africa, is widely distributed throughout Mozambique, with the species most abundant in the north, particularly in Cabo Delgado (Jenkins et al, 2002). There it forms part of commercial forests which (in 2008) covered over a third of the land area¹⁶¹. Compared to Kenya, where it is now commercially exhausted, although not biologically extinct (Choge et al, 2005), and Tanzania where supplies are under threat (Ball, 2004), African blackwood is not yet considered to be an endangered species in Mozambique¹⁶². However, forest diversity is poorly documented, there is no accurate inventory of standing stock of African blackwood in the country (Jenkins et al, 2002) and law enforcement is deficient. Recent high levels of timber extraction by foreign companies in the north of Mozambique, a growing number from China, alleged over-extraction and lack of replanting, is raising concerns over the medium-term commercial sustainability of forest resources in Cabo Delgado (Sun et al, 2008; Kläy et al, 2008). This is particularly true for slow-growing varieties like African blackwood, with limited re-growth potential under natural conditions (Choge et al,

¹⁶⁰ Historically, Makonde carvers made (mapiko) masks and figures out of lightweight woods (like *Ficus sycamorus*) alongside functional objects (lip-plugs, bottle-stoppers) from *mpingo* (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004; Kingdon, 2005).

¹⁶¹ Mazolli (2007), reported in Nhancale et al (2009) suggests that about 4,800 ('000ha) or about 62% of the total land area in Cabo Delgado and 9,400 ('000ha) in Niassa (or 77% of the land area) was classified as forested land in 2007, with an average figure of 51% for Mozambique as a whole. This represents a rather broader definition of 'forest' land than that used by Sun et al (2008) who focus on commercial viability.

¹⁶² Due to its value and scarcity African blackwood was first classified as a precious species under legislation (Decree No,12/81) passed in Mozambique in 1981 (Jenkins et al, 2002).

2005). This has fundamental implications for the availability of raw materials for carvers and for their future livelihoods.

African blackwood is a relatively small, heavily branched deciduous tree, which normally reaches a height of 4-8 metres, but can exceptionally grow to 20 metres. The diameter at breast height (DBH) does not normally exceed 50cm (Jenkins et al, 2002), but trunks are rarely circular in cross-section. Although difficult to assess, the minimum age of a harvestable tree appears to be in excess of 50 years (Ball, 2004). The dark heartwood core is surrounded by an outer ring (up to 2 cm thick) of lighter, cream coloured sapwood. The heartwood is extremely hard and heavy, naturally oily and of fine texture. It is good for cutting and carving precisely and can be finished well. The colour of the heartwood varies from black to brown which seems likely to relate to moisture availability and rate of growth of the tree (Jenkins et al, 2002).

Apart from woodcarving, there are other competing uses for African blackwood in Cabo Delgado (Jenkins et al, 2002). Certainly until the last few years, the most important export market was its use in Europe for the manufacture of woodwind instruments (mainly oboes and clarinets), for which it is uniquely suited because of its particular physical characteristics. Until the establishment of the sawmill owned by Theodor Nagel in Montepuez in the late 1990s, exports of blackwood from Cabo Delgado to Germany were almost entirely in roundwood (log) form, with processing (and manufacture of woodwind instruments) taking place abroad¹⁶³. Once the saw mill was operational, logs were sourced from local communities and timber companies under annual licences granted by provincial authorities. Carvers are able to use a broader range of mpingo wood, much more variable in shape, colour and quality, than instrument manufacturers. Indeed, they can incorporate any natural twists, faults or colour variations of the wood

¹⁶³ Exports of African blackwood from Mozambique as timber (largely from Cabo Delgado) averaged about 800m³ per year in the 1990s; Theodor Nagel, a German timber company, reportedly controlled 90% of the trade in African blackwood in Mozambique in 2001, with the rest divided by several small South African companies (Jenkins et al, 2002).

into their work (West and Malugu, 2003). Mpingo also has variety of other local uses in addition to carving, including production of functional objects like pestles and combs; its roots and leaves are also useful to village households for medicinal purposes. Household surveys indicate that charcoal is sometimes made from mpingo, but it is not favoured because it burns too intensely and can damage cooking pots (Jenkins et al, 2002). Mpingo's hardness, which rapidly blunts cutting edges, making it difficult to fell, saw and work, means that, given the choice, other tree species are likely to be used for charcoal in preference to mpingo.

The sourcing of blackwood varies depending on carver location. The urban-based carvers in Pemba buy *mpingo* directly from those timber companies operating in Cabo Delgado which have local depots in the vicinity of the city (including three Chinese-owned enterprises, Mofid, Kings Way and Thienhe)¹⁶⁴. Company employees may sometimes deliver wood to the cooperatives for a transport fee. The material represents wood which is not of appropriate quality or which may arise as 'offcuts' in the process of preparing wood for export¹⁶⁵. The timber companies sometimes sell pieces to their employees that are not good enough for export¹⁶⁶. The carvers indicated that availability of wood from timber companies shipping roundwood through Pemba port was not a problem for them, the main issue (apart from cost) being transport from the timber yards on the outskirts of the city. In contrast, a craft shop owner in Pemba suggested that both cost and availability of *mpingo* were likely to be increasing concerns for the

¹⁶⁴ Interview with EM, 15th May 2010. He reported that Bela Baia Cooperative had bought 15m³ of *mpingo* (enough for three months carving) from a 'Chinese timber company' for MZM 15,000 (about US\$450, or \$30 per m³) which delivered it to the cooperative.

¹⁶⁵ BS (Group Discussion, Cooperative Mpingo, 27th July 2005) and FM (Group Discussion, Karibu Wimbe 13th August, 2005). UNESCO (1999) reported that employees of timber exporting companies sold on *mpingo* offcuts to Pemba carvers for (at the time) 25,000-50,000 Mtcs (or \$2-\$4) delivered for pieces 1-1.5 metres long. Jenkins et al (2002) suggest that carvers in Montepuez were allowed to collect offcuts from the local blackwood sawmill free of charge.

¹⁶⁶ Visit to Mpanga timber yard with PM, 24th May 2010. According to Barbara Kruspan, this timber yard, on the Airport Road, just outside Pemba, 'belongs to Mozambicans from Beira' (email correspondence, 6th July 2011).

carvers based in the city and was expected to lead to a diversification of raw materials¹⁶⁷.

The 'rural' carvers harvest the wood themselves; none reported problems in terms of physical availability although, for many, accessing supplies of wood is often physically exhausting. The carvers located in the villages surveyed around Pemba (Mieze and Walupwana) suggested that *mpingo* is in plentiful supply and in relatively close proximity to the villages¹⁶⁸. The carvers in Mueda town and villages on the Mueda plateau, conversely, stressed the arduousness of the harvesting process, which typically involves frequent, long journeys by foot down from the plateau. Several respondents indicated that the journey took up to four hours or so in each direction, suggesting a distance of 10-15 km from the village. These harvesting trips often last several days and require hard physical effort first to cut the trees, sometimes using simple axes, rather than saws, followed by a lengthy journey to carry the wood back to the village. Several reported that the hardness of the wood and the difficulty of cutting it gave them 'wounds' in their hands which take a while to heal, often preventing them from carving. Sometimes carvings are initiated in situ to reduce the burden. The wood is free, but assistance with felling, cutting and transport, if needed, might typically cost MZM 50,000 (or US\$2) for each 'batch'¹⁶⁹. A member of one of the carving groups in Mueda town described the process thus:

¹⁶⁷ Some carvers in Pemba and Mieze are increasing their use of rosewood or sandalwood to add variety; carvings from these materials are already very common in Maputo, partly reflecting the difficulty and cost in acquiring *mpingo* and partly representing stylistic development. Interviews with Lesley, Arte Maconde Ltd, 12th and 13th April 2005. See Chapter 7 for a further discussion of this issue.

¹⁶⁸ AM (Group Discussion, Mieze) and SA (Group Discussion, Walupwana village), both 28th July 2005.

¹⁶⁹ Discussion with AK, Field Notes, 20th April 2005. This is relatively low compared with raw material costs in other parts of East Africa, like Kenya, which has an active system of middleman who supply wood to carvers. Choge et al (2005) suggest that in Kenya raw material costs represent 30% of total carving costs.

We have hard work, first the wood we get far way from here. We use axe for cutting mpingo and our heads and shoulders as transport. When we go down hill we can bring back just a few pieces of wood and sometimes if we have some money we invite some people to help us in transporting the pieces of mpingo wood.

HM, Group Discussion, Association Llvambwe, Mueda (17th July 2005)

As a species officially listed as ‘Precious’, logging of *mpingo* is regulated, with the Mozambican government setting a national harvest quota and permission to cut granted through annual licenses¹⁷⁰. For the rural carvers, *mpingo* is typically seen as a common property resource or a *de facto* open-access resource (only one cooperative indicated that it held a cutting licence issued by the Ministry of Agriculture)¹⁷¹ and questions of legality or sustainability of raw materials were not otherwise raised as a concern. The legal issue is a complicated one. In Mozambique, land and forest resources belong to the state, but can be leased. Rights to exploit forest products can then be acquired in one of three ways: through a long-term concession, using an annual ‘simple licence’ (revived after the peace agreement in 1992 to stimulate timber production) or acquired through customary habitation of the land (Sun et al, 2008). These ‘rights’ were embodied in two sets of laws which were passed covering access to forest resources in Mozambique – the Land Law (1997) and the Forestry and Wildlife Law of 1999 (with its regulations formally approved in 2002)¹⁷². The former confirms forest communities’ right of habitation and subsistence; while they are able to use any forest product for their own consumption, they are not allowed to ‘commercialise’ these without a licence, but can negotiate agreements with commercial organisations (generally timber companies) which might bring them economic

¹⁷⁰ In 2002, the national African blackwood quota amounted to 1,000 tonnes of roundwood with 60% of this allocated to Cabo Delgado. Timber companies submit bids at Provincial level, but the full quota, certainly prior to 2002, was not taken up (Jenkins et al, 2003).

¹⁷¹ Group Discussions, Nandimba, Mueda District, 16th July 2005.

¹⁷² The Land Law (1997) recognises and protects traditional rights to land, including forests. The Forest and Wildlife Law (1999/2002) sets out the rights and benefits of forest dependent communities. It ostensibly focused on setting up structures to improve the distribution of revenues to communities from commercial forest exploitation (which was stipulated at 20% of total forest revenues), but the reality has been very different (Bossel and Norfolk, 2007) and often contradictory to the intention of the Land Law of 1997 (Ribeiro, 2008).

benefit (Norfolk and Tanner, 2007). However, although there is protection enshrined in the 1999 law for local communities in forest legislation, it has not been enacted¹⁷³. These local communities 'cannot participate in sharing the benefits of commercial harvesting, and their representatives often take bribes to forego community interests' (Sun et al, 2008: 34).

For the carvers, one reading of the legislation suggests that while possession of a cutting licence is technically required because the process of carving mpingo may ultimately involve 'commercialisation', another is that occasionally harvesting a single tree and using its various products (roots, leaves, pods, wood for charcoal and for carving functional household items) does not. In the context of the general lack of transparency in the way that forest use rights have been allocated under the law, this uncertainty seems inevitable, particularly as '(i)mplementation of these... laws has been hampered by lack of political will, lack of cooperation from the timber industry and poor institutional capacity' (Sun et al, 2008: 32). In addition, effective monitoring has proven to be especially difficult and expensive to undertake (Kl  y et al, 2008).

The timber industry (and its operations) in Cabo Delgado have changed dramatically, and for the worse, over the last ten years as Mozambique has been drawn into a new global forest product value chain centred on China¹⁷⁴. In volume terms, China (including Hong Kong) accounted for 85% of Mozambican timber exports between 2001 and 2005, with South Africa and several European countries taking most of the rest¹⁷⁵. Nationally, a high proportion – almost 60% -

¹⁷³ Ribeiro (2008) reports that during a field visit to Cabo Delgado 'communities complained about extensive logging...around their villages, high numbers of abandoned logs (with small defects), the indiscriminate logging of small and large trees...and the number of foreign operators in the province'.

¹⁷⁴ A global chain of forest products has now been formed. At its centre is China, the manufacturing base that imports primary raw materials from developing countries and exports finished products to major consumers in developed Western countries' (Sun et al, 2008: iii). See also Mackenzie (2006) who suggests that mpingo is increasingly used for high value furniture manufacture in China.

¹⁷⁵ Data problems abound, however, with great inconsistency between sources. Tracking Mozambican timber exports to China is made more difficult because many are trans-shipped

of reported forest exports in 2005 was in the form of roundwood (logs). Chinese companies are involved throughout the timber supply chain in Cabo Delgado, acting mainly as sawmill operators and exporters, but they also finance and lease equipment to Mozambican simple licence holders (SLHs), over half of whom sell logs to Chinese sawmills (Bossel and Norfolk, 2007). Chinese-owned companies also own at least two large concessions for harvesting timber in Cabo Delgado and obtain the majority of logs from several others. Although Mozambican Forest Law stipulates that Precious species (like *mpingo*) must be processed in-country, this is not enforced. There have been a number of instances of the attempted illegal export of vast quantities of unprocessed logs, including precious wood, from Pemba, the latest incident being in January 2011. Five companies were reportedly involved, all Chinese-owned (Mofid, Thienhe, Pacifico Internacional, Sinlan and Alphaben), in the attempted export of 161 20-foot containers of logs (as well substantial quantities of ivory) all destined for China. It is apparent that local officials from forestry and customs services were complicit and only intervention by the police prevented the exports leaving Pemba port¹⁷⁶. Cerutti et al's (2011) damning verdict, (summarising various studies reviewing the illegal timber trade with China from Mozambique and Tanzania), was that '(e)xports of unprocessed logs (against official policy), manipulation of official statistics and various forms of corruption have undermined economic gains' to both countries (23). Finally, Bossel and Norfolk's concluding comments on the impact of current forest policy on Cabo Delgado are worth quoting at length:

through other ports on route. In addition, there is likely to be a considerable volume of illegal timber exports, either because they are un- or underreported (Sun et al, 2008).

¹⁷⁶ Mofid owned over half the containers seized in January 2011, but had already been caught twice before (in 2004 and 2007) (allafrica.com, 2011a). Six inspectors working for the Cabo Delgado Provincial Forestry and Wildlife Department were subsequently suspended in March 2011 (allafrica.com, 2011b). However the fines that have historically been levied (just over \$31,000 in 2007 for four Chinese companies) are hardly likely to be a disincentive, given the volume of timber involved (almost 1000m³ in 2007).

'The uncontrolled ... overexploitation of forests in Cabo Delgado is eliminating assets that could provide long-term employment and contribute towards sustained economic growth in the province. Instead, the declining supply of timber means that local people will soon lose their forests (or, at least their high value trees); this represents an important lost potential source of revenue, firewood and non-timber forest products' (2007: 110).

The absence of specific (and reliable) data on *mpingo* harvesting and exports by timber companies in Cabo Delgado makes it impossible to accurately assess current rates of extraction. However the carvers are well aware that the recent dramatic rise in timber production is likely to mean greater difficulty in accessing raw materials and lead to more rapid exhaustion of commercial stocks¹⁷⁷. In the short-term, the Pemba-based woodcarvers might conceivably benefit from the greater volume of (unprocessed) timber arriving in the city for export, but they are likely to be increasingly faced by higher prices or be forced to accept a lower quality of wood. The rural carvers face the prospect of travelling further and further from their villages to access supplies of *Dalbergia melanoxylon*. The prospect of a declining resource base raises real doubts about the continued viability of carver livelihoods and is illustrative of the progressive economic (and political) marginalisation of woodcarvers in Mozambican society. It also provides stark evidence of the impact of recent development policies – which give large domestic and foreign private sector interests privileged and large unfettered access to natural resources – on the livelihoods of the poor. This seems an inevitable consequence of the resource extraction growth model prevailing in Mozambique over the last ten years (Castel-Branco, 2011).

¹⁷⁷ Interview with EM, Cooperative Bela Baia, Pemba, 15th May 2010.

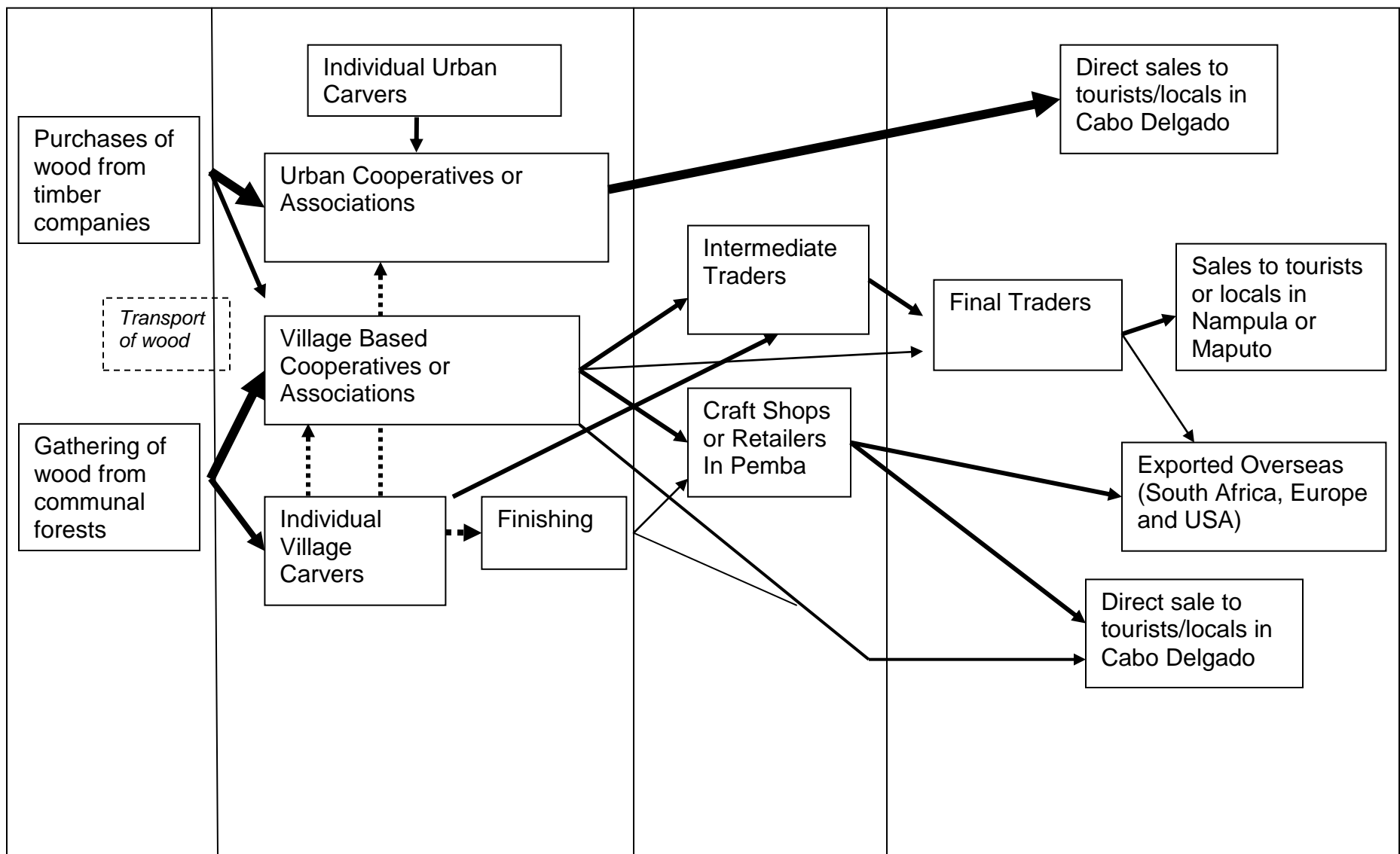


Figure 2: Commodity/Value Chain for Makonde Woodcarvings from Cabo Delgado

6.1.2 Production: Carving and Finishing

Location of production

Originally based entirely on the Mueda Plateau, (see Chapter 2 for an account of the historical evolution of Makonde woodcarving), the production of Makonde carvings has become increasingly geographically dispersed, the product of waves of enforced migration – as a means of resistance to colonialism, in response to dislocation and war, or drawn by changing forms and sources of patronage. Within Cabo Delgado, there are now carving groups in Pemba and surrounding villages, in Montepuez and Mocimboa da Praia. The most recent ‘migration’ is a movement of carvers to the new tourist ‘enclaves’ of the Quirimbas Archipelago¹⁷⁸. Other important concentrations of Makonde sculptors in Mozambique are found in Nampula and Maputo (de Vletter, 2008). Finally, in Tanzania, while the vast majority of Makonde carvers are based in Dar es Salaam (either in Mwenge crafts village or the townships), other significant groupings can still be found in Mtwara (Kingdon, 2002; Molony, 2005). While the Tanzanian Makonde woodcarving chain (as Chapter 2 makes clear) differs fundamentally from the woodcarving ‘chain’ originating in Cabo Delgado in terms of scale, organisation and markets, I will refer to it from time to time for illustrative purposes.

Organisation and Scale

In parallel with the geographical diffusion of Makonde carving activity, which has involved a general tendency for carvers to move to urban centres, has come the emergence of more varied organisational forms. However, compared to the large carving centres which have developed in Tanzania and Kenya, with cooperatives in the latter involving over one thousand resident carvers in ‘production line

¹⁷⁸ I was told during my visit to Bela Baia Cooperative, Pemba, 15th May 2010, that one carver (interviewed as part of the household survey in July 2005) had since gone to Matemo Island, where there are ‘many tourists’.

industrial processes' (Choge et al, 2005)¹⁷⁹, concentrations of Makonde woodcarvers in Mozambique remain relatively small-scale, even in urban centres. The variations in scale in different settings clearly reflect very different levels of current market demand, from tourists and other export markets. However, the unique historical circumstances within which carving evolved in each case – the length of carving 'traditions', differing forms of 'patronage' and colonial (and post-colonial) policies – have also been important.

In Cabo Delgado, carving production is practised both by individual carvers and by carvers working side-by-side in Cooperatives or Associations¹⁸⁰ of varying size. The 13 Cooperatives and Associations in my survey (of July 2005) ranged in size from 2 to 32 reported members (see Table 9, Chapter 5), although there appeared to be some fluidity (including seasonal changes) in membership. All were formed after Independence, the earliest (Cooperative Mpingo, in Pemba) in 1979 and the last (Association Shulumu, in Mpeme, Mueda district) in 2000. Reflecting the 'part-time' nature of the activity, rural carvers are more likely to operate as individuals (even if they move in and out of being members of a loosely-based Association). The Pemba-based carvers, on the other hand, tend to be part of more formally structured licensed Cooperatives, but in the city there are also two or three small groupings of individual Makonde carvers selling items from roadside stalls¹⁸¹. The frequent temporary migration by carvers from town to

¹⁷⁹ According to West and Malugu (2003) there are 1,500, mainly Makonde, carvers supplying carvings to more than 70 shops at Mwenge craft market outside Dar es Salaam. However, during my field visit to Mwenge on 10th April 2005 two separate informants indicated that there were 800-1000 carvers regularly supplying the craft market (Field Notes, April 2005). Carvers work there on a regular basis, divided into carving cooperatives with average membership of 15-20 carvers. (West and Malugu, 2003). This suggests a comparable group size to those found in Cabo Delgado.

¹⁸⁰ While somewhat hazy, the distinction between a Carver Cooperative (which must have at least 10 members) and a Carver Association is essentially a legal one. Although it appears also to have implications for member benefits and contributions, and group behaviour, it does not involve shared ownership or collective agency to any great degree. The terms were often used interchangeably by carvers and others simply to refer to formal groupings of carvers. My view is that only the three Pemba carving groups should be considered Cooperatives (Field Notes, various).

¹⁸¹ In 2010 there were three carvers at Arte Afrika (opposite the Pemba Beach Hotel) and two who worked at the Casa de Cultura nearby (Interview with Emile Badran, AGF, 24th May 2010).

countryside (or vice versa), however, makes a strict distinction between rural and urban carvers difficult to sustain.

Within villages on the Mueda Plateau and those outside Pemba, 'master' carvers will sometimes have small groups of apprentices working for them; in Pemba, there are a number of individual 'part-time' carvers who sell their production via the Cooperatives¹⁸². Within my survey, Idovo, Mueda district and Walupwana near Metuge provide examples of village-based household production. However, even in the former, groupings of carvers would coalesce and work together under a central, covered area, although they produced and sold carvings individually, with no apparent sharing of revenues¹⁸³.

However, geographic dispersion has not brought with it gender or ethnic differentiation. In Cabo Delgado, woodcarving remains entirely in the hands of men. A variety of explanations for this gender 'monopoly' was offered by the carvers, but most referred to 'Makonde cultural heritage' and a 'traditional' division of labour in which 'men are carvers and women are potters'. Carving as a male 'preserve' seems to be common (see Molony (2005) on Makonde carving in Tanzania, Choge et al (2005) for Kamba carving in Kenya and Standa-Gunda and Braedt (2005) on Zimbabwe). In all these cases, however, women are involved in finishing and retailing¹⁸⁴. In terms of ethnicity, all, but one, of the 194 carvers enumerated during fieldwork in July-August 2005 were Makonde (the exception was Alide Suli, a Makua, a member of the Bela Baia cooperative), and often, though not exclusively, the Associations or Cooperatives contain a preponderance of carvers from the same *likola*, or kinship group. In this sense,

¹⁸² Daniel Mwanga estimated the number of 'part-time', Makua, carvers at 50. He indicated that the cooperative retained 20% of the value of any sales (Field Notes, 9th July 2005).

¹⁸³ Despite their frequently voiced (in 2005) intention to re-form the previously existing village association, by the time of my field visit five years later the Idovo carvers no longer had a central, designated area in which to work and appeared much more fragmented (Field Notes, 19th May 2010); see further discussion in Chapter 7.

¹⁸⁴ Interestingly, however, on my later field visit to Idovo (in May 2010) I discovered that Sabina Senhula a village potter had carved *mpingo* for some time, mainly producing functional objects, although this was barely publicly acknowledged by the other village carvers.

they combine the standard features of two common forms of African ‘artists groups’ identified by Kasfir (1999); that of community-founded cooperatives and ‘old-fashioned’ kin-based workshops.

All the Cooperatives and Associations have, to a greater or lesser extent, some formal allocation of roles or responsibilities (usually, President, Secretary and Treasurer, at least)¹⁸⁵. Most report holding regular meetings (up to once a month in some cases) to plan work and organise raw material supply, as well as organising emergency meetings to resolve problems as they arise. The Associations (and non-licensed cooperatives) are informal group-based enterprises, but with clear rules on membership and carver obligations, illustrating the fluidity of formal-informal boundaries. Each carver works individually as a ‘self-employed’ artisan, but there is a requirement that he as a member contributes part of any sales revenue to the Association¹⁸⁶. The three Pemba-based collectives are all formal, licensed Cooperatives, which paid (in 2005) a fixed annual licence fee of about \$50, plus 17% monthly income tax, to the provincial government. Each member pays a joining fee (a ‘treasury duty’), reported to be equivalent to US\$10 (in 2005) and then contributes 10% of the value of any of their carvings that are sold by the cooperative¹⁸⁷. Bela Baia Cooperative reported in 2005 that average annual revenues received amounted to ‘only’ US\$80 per member ‘because they are not selling a lot of carvings’. In theory this levy was intended to pay for the maintenance of Cooperative facilities, new infrastructure, medical care for carving injuries and wider social protection, but was ‘insufficient’ to do so.

¹⁸⁵ Bela Baia Cooperative in Pemba listed seven positions in addition to these: Vice-President, Vice-Secretary, Vice Treasurer, Coordinators, Responsible for Production (sic), Salesmen (three posts) and Responsible for Cleaning (sic), although some individuals held multiple positions (Group Discussion, 9th July 2005).

¹⁸⁶ Interview with VC, Bela Baia Cooperative, Pemba, 26th April 2005.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with DM, Karibu Wimbe, Pemba, 14th April 2005 and Group Discussion, Bela Baia, Pemba, 9th July 2005.

The Production Process

Blackwood is not generally stored in large quantities, but is harvested or purchased as needed. The rural carvers suggested that one harvesting trip (of one to two weeks) will provide sufficient wood on average for two to three months worth of work for rural carvers (although for some carvers working on a single large sculpture, like Rabuci Kulukambea in Mpeme, the wood would often last much longer). The urban carvers tend to buy raw materials in bulk, but the quantity purchased clearly depends on availability of funds¹⁸⁸. In the rural areas there is a pronounced seasonality to production, with carving being generally a dry season (May-August in Cabo Delgado) activity once the demands from farming have eased. The Pemba cooperatives face a seasonality of a different sort, with sales volumes related to high tourist arrivals between May and August, with a second peak in December and January. There may also be seasonal variations in raw material availability (and cost), with the rainy season restricting forest access (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004).

The production process begins with the wood being (cross) cut and split to the desired size, after which carving can begin. An adze or hammer and chisel are used to remove the outer sapwood and to roughly outline the sculpture. Carvers do not routinely plan the carvings on paper, or even mark out the designs on the wood; indeed, several of the Master carvers expressed shock or amusement at the idea. In contrast to the carving workshops in Dar es Salaam where there is clear task-specific specialisation (between carvers, finishers/polishers and sellers)¹⁸⁹, suggesting a high level of commodification, in the Makonde carving groups in Cabo Delgado all the stages of production – cutting, chiselling/gouging, shaving with a knife, filing, sanding and polishing– will be typically undertaken by

¹⁸⁸ Note the contrast between the large quantity of *mpingo* stored outside Bela Baia Cooperative (Field Visit, 15th May, 2010) and PM's purchase of a single log using MZM500 (\$18) that I had given him (Field Visit, 24th May 2010).

¹⁸⁹ At Mwenge Craft Village, carving may take place offsite by Makonde carvers, with carvings finished by non-Makonde 'fundi' employed directly by craft shop owners (Field Notes, 10th April 2005); the carving shops may also buy unfinished pieces from visiting carvers (West and Malugu, 2003). In the large carving cooperatives in Kenya these different stages are undertaken for a fee by different men (Choge et al, 2005); they suggest that only 60% of cooperative members undertake the actual carving.

a single individual. Evidence from my survey (July 2005) indicated that carvers on average own one each of the most important tools (adze, file, gouge, saw) together with six chisels. Most of the latter they have to make themselves, as manufactured tools (of better quality) are rarely available locally or are too expensive. Sometimes the more routine stages (eg filing or sanding) might be delegated to apprentices¹⁹⁰. Each of these stages adds value to the wood (Table 10); sanding is a routine activity, but one that greatly influences the price of the final product (Choge et al, 2005). However, it relies on the availability of sandpaper, which is costly and often unavailable to rural carvers; unfinished carvings are therefore often purchased by urban carvers or traders who are able to generate value by sanding and polishing¹⁹¹.

Table 10: Share of Final Value¹		
Production Stage	Pemba City (urban-based cooperative)	Nandimba (village association)
Cost of wood (including transport)	MZM100 (7%)	MZM20 (3%)
Carving	MZM800 (53%)	MZM300 (40%)
Finishing (including sanding & polishing)	MZM200 (13%)	MZM300 (40%)
Selling	MZM250 (17%)	MZM50 (7%)

Source: Author's estimates

Notes:

1. Share of final value of 20cm hollow ujamaa, sold for MZM1,500 to a tourist in Pemba, direct from the Cooperative or sold for MZM750 to a trader visiting Nandimba. In both cases, the cooperative/association is assumed to retain 10% of the final proceeds.

¹⁹⁰ West and Malugu (2003), Choge et al (2005) and Standa-Gunda and Braedt (2005) all indicate that sometimes these tasks are performed by women. I found no direct evidence of this during my initial research visits in 2005, with most carvers indicating women were not involved at any point in the woodcarving 'chain'.

¹⁹¹ PI, an individual carver living in Mueda town provides an example of the former (Field Notes, 19th April 2005); PM indicated to me that this was not an uncommon practice and one that he was considering himself (17th May 2010); the potential mark-up he suggested (an 'unfinished' rural carving bought for MZM200-300, finished and sold in Pemba for MZM1500-2000) sounded remarkable, if probably exaggerated.

Estimating the amount of wood used by carvers is difficult and depends on several heroic assumptions, as well as multiple extrapolations (Jenkins at al, 2003), including carving types, speed of carving and wastage¹⁹². For instance, the number of pieces produced by individual carvers (and their raw material use) clearly depends on sculpture size, complexity and, of course, quality. For example, while small ‘skeletons’ (thin statuettes of men and women generally produced in pairs) take two or three days each to produce and use very small quantities of wood, single large (2 metre) *ujamaas* may take up to a year to carve and use entire trunks. However, size is clearly not all that matters; *ujamaa* tend to be ‘time-intensive’ because the facial features are relatively detailed compared to *maasai*, which Malugu and West (2003) describe as ‘wood-intensive’, because a large volume of wood can be carved in the same amount of time.

Working within Associations/Cooperatives allows the sharing of tools, knowledge, marketing opportunities and of course risks (as well as organising the sourcing and harvesting of raw materials). However, it appears rare that cooperative members will work together unless, for instance, there are large commissions that need to be completed. There may even be a potential tension between the production requirements of the cooperative – aimed at revenue maximization – and individual innovation and experimentation in styles and approaches. During their apprenticeships the carvers are exposed to an established repertoire of simple forms (animals, busts, small figures) to ensure they are able to replicate ‘traditional’ forms (or ‘prototypes’). However, once trained, individual carvers tend to specialise in a limited range of genres and products (on average, three or four) depending on their particular skill and preferences¹⁹³. While it is apparent, even to the relatively untrained ‘Western’ eye, that the quality of work varies enormously between individual carvers, I did not, however, observe the sharp distinction between the ‘hack/mediocre carvers’ and ‘master carvers’ identified by

¹⁹² Estimates suggest that as much as 40% of the original timber is discarded during carving (Standa-Gunda, 2005 and Braedt, 2005).

¹⁹³ See de Vletter (2008). This point was raised frequently in Group Discussions (July/August, 2005).

Richter (1980), discussed in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, the drive for specialisation is clearly not just skill-determined, but also reflects a perception of 'what sells' (in terms of style, form and scale) and is therefore intrinsic to growing commodification.

Every one decides what he wants to produce, because the cooperative members have different skills and different type of carvings they can produce. So there is no common plan of production. All members are specialized in one kind of carving.

JC, Group Discussion, Bela Baia Cooperative, Pemba (9th July, 2005)

Several cooperatives have recognised the need to differentiate their products from other groups¹⁹⁴, but in reality the scope for creativity and innovation has turned out to be rather limited. Instead, there has been an inevitable move towards standardisation and 'commodification'¹⁹⁵. Indeed, it was readily apparent from a host of comments that most carvers were very conscious of the need to 'carve for the market':

We are very influenced by the clients. Many clients like Maasai carvings, that's why many carvers are producing maasai. We have many types of styles, like Makonde with their tattoo, dogs, shetani, but we no long produce these styles because our clients don't buy them. This is the way we produce carvings.

LJ, Group Discussion, Miula Village, Mueda District, (14th July 2005)

I don't know if we are changing the style of carving or not but what I want to say is that nowadays we are carving according to the market demand, sometime we receive the order, otherwise we carve the style which has good image in the market. And the last years we carved according to our ability, skills, and perception in this art.

FM, Group Discussion, Cooperative Karibu Wimbe, Pemba (13th August 2005)

¹⁹⁴ Group Discussions at Karibu Wimbe, Pemba (13th August, 2005); Cooperative Mpingo, Pemba (27th July 2005) and Association Arte Makonde, Mpeme (18th July 2005). However, of the three groups only the last of these (and within this two carvers in particular) seem to have developed a recognisable niche, based on large, complex *ujamaa* of unique design (Field Notes, 20th May 2010).

¹⁹⁵ According to Kacimi and Sulger (2004: 10) the Makonde (Master) carvers they studied in Cabo Delgado are forced 'to make ends' meet by selling 'bread and butter' pieces to tourists.

My survey gives some support to the view that current styles of carving have emerged in response to market preferences, particularly those of tourists, with the most popular carving styles now reportedly *bindanamu* and *maasai*, but indicating also little variety between carvers. There is an apparent paradox here, recognised by Steiner (1999), of carvers being drawn to repetition of a limited number of styles and displaying these for sale to tourists. Far from reflecting ‘a lack of entrepreneurial skills’, his interpretation is that tourists are not looking for the unexpected, but the familiar; in this way standardisation ‘underscores to prospective tourist buyers that these artworks ‘fit the mould’ (Steiner, 1999: 96). In this way ‘standardisation’ establishes guidelines for producers (in terms of what to make) and guidance for purchasers in terms of what is worth buying. This suggests that tourism is likely to stifle innovation, rather than to encourage it.

6.1.3 Selling Carvings: Retailers, Traders and Tourists

The role of ‘outsiders’ – tourists being the latest and arguably most powerful of these – have thus been crucial in drawing the carvers into a ‘global’ woodcarving chain, within which their work has become increasingly commodified. During the colonial era, patronage by missionaries and colonial administrators stimulated production of blackwood carvings. Later, the role of intermediary traders linking producers in Mueda and to a lesser extent Pemba with vendors in Nampula, Beira, Maputo and internationally was crucial to the expansion of the market for Makonde sculptures¹⁹⁶. Migration of woodcarvers to Dar es Salaam (in the 1950s and 1960s) and later Maputo expanded the geographical spread of carving activity and the availability of ‘authentic’ Makonde carvings outside of Cabo Delgado. More recently (in the last twenty years or so) there have been three key influences on the way in which wood carvings (and handicrafts in general) have

¹⁹⁶ The movement of woodcarvings by long-distance ‘itinerant’ traders is almost invariably from north to south of the country, usually via road (by bus), but occasionally by air. These traders, often working in close-knit related family groups, buy both directly from producers and from intermediaries (with good local knowledge and links with scattered rural carvers). The UNESCO Baseline Study (1999) suggested typical trader mark-ups on producer prices of 100%, and on intermediary prices of 50%.

been sold in Cabo Delgado. Firstly, an expansion in the number of tourists (see Chapter 4) has supported sales, particularly of smaller, portable, sculptures, but largely in Pemba. This has also led, indirectly, to increased purchases of functional items (ashtrays, key holders and napkin holders) by hotels and restaurants. Possible sales opportunities have also prompted an influx of carvers from Mueda and other rural areas, and encouraged return migration from Tanzania (as discussed in Chapter 2). Secondly, there has been the growth of a Pemba-based craft enterprise, Arte Maconde Lda (originally established as CeeBee Ltd in the 1990s), now with three shops which sell a range of handicrafts from Cabo Delgado, including regular quantities of high quality Makonde carvings, but mainly sourced from outside Pemba¹⁹⁷. Finally, the Aga Khan Foundation's Entrepreneur Development Initiative launched in 2007 has promoted the establishment of a Union of Craft Associations in Cabo Delgado (UACAD), aimed at improving the marketing of handicrafts, which has included the opening of a craft outlet (branded as Ujamaa) outside Pemba airport. The initiative is focused only on the coastal districts of the province, however, thus excluding the carvers in Mueda¹⁹⁸.

Earnings by craft producers can arise as both direct effect (tourists' 'out of pocket spending') and indirect effect (sales from handicraft outlets or by traders) from tourism, but as discussed in Chapter 4, the published evidence on the potential benefits to the handicraft sector from tourism is limited. Some writers believe that spending on crafts might generally considered to be more 'pro-poor' than other items of tourist expenditure (Mitchell and Ashley, *op. cit.*), although there are clear issues of definition, methodology and measurement here¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁷ This point was made by de Vletter (2008), who also cited growing awareness and appreciation of Makonde Art (through various books and international exhibitions) as a factor.

¹⁹⁸ These interventions followed a series of 'value chain analyses' conducted by AGF in Geneva (Interview with Emile Badran, 24th May 2010) which indicated the identification of new markets as a key recommendation for the Makonde carving 'value chain' (de Vletter, 2008). Most carving groups do not appear to actively 'market' their sculptures (although Cooperative Mpingo in Pemba, at some distance from tourist areas, have sometimes used young boys to sell carvings 'at the beach or in the street'), but wait for customers to come to them.

¹⁹⁹ In the case of the Gambia (beach package tourism), for instance, income from craft sales represented an estimated one-third of total 'pro-poor income' (PPI) from destination spending

There is no doubt that tourism has provided a key stimulus to the growth of commercial woodcarving industries in most African countries over the last fifty years and direct tourist purchases account for a high proportion of carving sales in Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa (Cunningham et al, 2005), and Tanzania (West and Malugu, 2003). Carving is seen by many as a valued cultural asset, by visitors and by local residents alike,²⁰⁰ and in this way itself contributes to the tourist 'experience' as evidence of a 'unique local culture' and a source of souvenirs, and in some cases provides the focus for 'cultural tourism' (Ondimu, 2002). Although unlikely to be large in number, cultural tourists are on average higher spenders and can help empower local communities by protecting and developing cultural products complementary to, but sometimes far removed from, popular tourist attractions (Zeppel and Hall, 1992) and in a sustainable way (Manwa, 2007). On the other hand, of course, 'cultural' tourism, like any other type of tourist incursion, can be far from benign in its impact on local communities, including carving groups.

The woodcarvers in Pemba mainly sell their sculptures directly to passing tourists or to local expatriates, but also produce functional or decorative items commissioned by local businesses. Somewhat surprisingly, none of the Pemba carvers reported regular links with markets in Maputo or in South Africa, but for the latter, at least, the distinction between 'tourist' and 'trader' may not have been obviously apparent to the carvers. In my survey of recent sales, 50% of Pemba-based carvers (n=20) reported selling solely to tourists, with 95% selling to tourists and locals; reported sales to traders were infrequent (but note the comment above). Purchases of carvings by local Mozambicans (as opposed to expatriates) for personal gifts and decorative purposes are growing, but still very limited²⁰¹. The opening of the Ujamaa shop offers another channel for sales, but

(Mitchell and Faal, 2007). In the Ethiopian tourist 'chain' an estimated 55% of total spending of US\$12.7 million in 2004 was deemed 'pro-poor' (ODI, 2005b).

²⁰⁰ Ondimu (2002), for instance, reports on a survey of the Gusii community in western Kenya. Respondents identified the three predominant cultural heritage elements (based on Factor Analysis) as being Woodcarving, Soapstone carving and Pottery.

²⁰¹ Email communication from Severo Mpachocha, 12th August 2010.

these so far have been relatively small; Arte Maconde Lda however now buys very few items from carvers in Pemba because these are 'too expensive', instead preferring to source carvings from Mieze, Mueda or other rural districts²⁰². Rural carvers have more limited opportunities for direct sales to tourists and rely more heavily on visiting traders, although those living in villages outside Pemba (Mieze and Walupwana, for example) regularly take carvings to be sold by cooperatives in the city. As 'outsiders' they would be required to contribute 20% of the sales price to the cooperative.

Of the 41 rural carvers surveyed, just 7% reported selling solely to tourists. On the other hand 75% indicated that they had sold to traders, with a fifth of these sales being made to traders from outside the Province. Arte Maconde Lda has had links to various 'fair trade' organisations (including Aid to Artisans in the USA and other European organisations), although in terms of carving sales at least these have been a relatively minor part of its business. The problem has been guaranteeing both the quantity and quality of carvings. The carvers appear ambivalent about the 'fair trade' market, at least its requirement for large numbers of relatively small, identical carvings. While offering the promise of more regular revenues, these standardized carvings often sit uncomfortably with the artistic/creative impulse of the sculptors and, like the tourist market, may cause undesirable cultural and artistic change through the pressure for 'mass' production²⁰³. Finally, there is also no guarantee that these 'fair trade' initiatives (and others including certification or eco-labelling) will generate higher incomes for producers, once the explicit and implicit costs of participation are factored in (Schmitt and Maingi, 2005). They will also exclude as well as include and may

²⁰² Interview with Lesley, Arte Makonde Lda, 24th May 2010. She suggested that the price of a carving bought in Mueda would be about half that of an identical carving bought in Pemba.

²⁰³ Sales to local businesses also tend to involve large orders for identical functional items which generate similar ambivalence amongst carvers. The US Aid to Artisans initiatives in Nampula involved the 'mass production of sugar pots' (Interview with Lesley, 15th April 2005).

lead to growing stratification between ‘beneficiaries’ and ‘non-beneficiaries’, even within the same carving group or community²⁰⁴.

The situation facing the carvers illustrates the paradox of commodification and specialisation in the face of limited demand (the ‘underconsumption’ thesis), with prices being depressed due to excess competition. Sales for all carvers tend to be at best erratic and, perhaps unexpectedly, all carvers complain of a lack of ‘clients’²⁰⁵. Here is one such frequently heard complaint:

The main problem is about the clients, who really do not exist, because we don't see clients here, they are not purchasing the carvings. Although we are not selling our products, we are carving without stop, but with not a great intensity because we need to produce our food for survival of our families.

JT, Group Discussion, Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (16th July 2005)

In the short-term, uneven sales will inevitably follow from the seasonality of tourist demand (which differs from the peaks in carving activity). More fundamentally, however, it has been due to production of carvings far exceeding sales in recent years (supported by my survey evidence), which has led to a growing stock of carvings held in carver stores or in households, more intense competition for sales and lower realised prices. Choge et al (2005: 37) suggest that on average up to ‘75% of the articles (produced by Kamba carvers) may remain unsold for several months, or even years, tying up capital for considerable periods’. The problem may be as acute as this in the rural areas of Cabo Delgado, where opportunities for sales to tourists are limited. This has forced carvers to sell to middlemen or traders, including those linked to dealers in South Africa, or to occasionally transport carvings in bulk to areas of higher potential

²⁰⁴ See Dolan (2010) for a critique of ‘fair trade’ as part of the ‘wider neo-liberal project’ which abstracts economic processes from ‘their social and political contexts’ (34). Issues of stylistic adaptation and ‘commodification’, the potential for ‘upgrading’ through certification and its limitations are explored more fully in Chapter 7.

²⁰⁵ Various Group Discussions, July 2005; VJ, for instance, from Bela Baia cooperative, complained about ‘staying almost three months without selling our products’ (9th July 2005).

demand²⁰⁶. However, the prices they obtain on these ‘distress’ sales are likely to be a fraction of the original asking price.

6.2 Carver Households in Cabo Delgado

Little systematic and reliable data was available on the numbers, distribution and household characteristics of carvers in the province prior to my empirical research (see Chapter 5). The survey that helps underpin this research thus provides the most detailed enumeration of woodcarvers in Pemba and Mueda district so far, and taken together with my qualitative research, provides a unique insight into contemporary carver livelihoods.

In this section I will explore various features of carvers and their households, their heterogeneity and commonalities. Comparison with provincial data from two national household surveys (IAF 2002/2003 and IFTRAB 2004/2005) allowed me to highlight any differences and peculiarities that might be worth exploring. Table 11 sets out the distribution between ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ households in the various data ‘sources’, noting of course – as I have done at several points in this study – the fluidity of these two categories, perhaps more so for carvers (as ‘footloose artisans’) than many other workers. The purposive sampling used in my carver survey has produced a sample fairly closely matching the urban/rural breakdown found in the overall carver population. However, while close to the rural/urban distribution used in the IFTRAB 2004/2005 survey, it is rather different from the sample on which the IAF 2002/2003 was based (which was heavily skewed towards rural households mirroring the distribution in the 1997 Cabo Delgado census)²⁰⁷. My data presentation and analysis is consequently disaggregated

²⁰⁶ According to EN, ASSEMA, Maputo, ‘carvers from Cabo Delgado (and Nampula) sometimes travel down to Maputo with bundles of carvings. They sell these to street vendors. ASSEMA has some spare room, so these itinerant carvers can stay for free, making the trip down south more worthwhile’ (Interview Notes, 4th April 2008).

²⁰⁷ Both national surveys used the 1997 population census as the basis for defining the rural/urban categories underpinning the sampling frame; this was problematic, because even five years later it was outdated given the speed of urbanisation in Cabo Delgado. It appears likely,

between urban and rural households to increase comparability, but I recognise also the need to explore the differences in terms of poverty and well-being within and between these broad categories.

Table 11: Household Data: Summary Breakdown		
	Urban	Rural
Carver Population (July 2005) (<i>n</i> =194) ¹	35%	65%
Carver Survey (July/August 2005) (<i>n</i> =61) ²	33%	67%
IAF (2002/2003) (<i>n</i> =738)	20%	80%
INTRAB:(2004/2005) (<i>n</i> =1720) ³	35%	65%

Source: Author; INE,2004; INE, 2006.

Notes:

1. Individual carvers, including a small number from the same households.

2. Household heads.

3. This was the sample size; there were 1681 usable surveys (97.7% of the total sample). I have assumed these were split in the same proportion as the original sample.

6.2.1 Carver Household Attributes

In addition to generating detailed data on 61 carvers, the household survey elicited information on a further 293 individuals who were members of the carvers' households. The survey defined 'household' in 'economic' terms – aiming to include all 'economically linked people' (contributors, dependents or both) – to better capture the complexity and dynamism of household membership. In contrast to the national survey data²⁰⁸ (eg the IAF or IFTRAB surveys reported here), this enabled me to include individuals who migrate temporarily (on a seasonal basis) or who support the household via remittances;

given the primary focus of IFTRAB 2004/2005 on labour force issues (employment, earnings etc), that urban households and residents were deliberately over-sampled.

²⁰⁸ IFTRAB 2004/2005 defines a household as 'people who generally live in the same house, eat meals together and share most of the costs' (IFTRAB, 2006).

in other words those who help contribute to household survival (Sender et al, 2006).

Household Structure and Relations

Household structure and intra-household relations, including the mobility of individual family members, can have a key bearing on livelihoods and on the potential for poverty reduction (Rakodi, 2002; Beall, 2004). According to my survey data, carver households ranged in scale from 1 to 18 individual members, with an average household size of 5.6 persons (median 5.5). Although this appears to indicate a relatively larger household size than the provincial average, direct comparison with national household survey data is problematic given the different definitions of the 'household' used²⁰⁹. National survey data, however, indicate a significantly higher proportion of large households (>8 members) are in urban areas, most likely due to rural-urban migration and higher household incomes in urban areas. Conversely, rural carver households appear to be, on average, relatively larger than rural households more generally (see Table 12).

²⁰⁹ It may also be because my survey included only male-headed households (see discussion below) and there is a tendency for female-headed (or 'dominated') households (which according to IFTRAB constituted 20% or so of the total in Cabo Delgado in 2004) to be smaller on average (see Howe and McKay, 2007 on Rwanda, for instance).

Table 12: Household Size

	Urban Carvers (2005)	Rural Carvers (2005)	CD Urban (IAF02/03)	CD Rural (IAF02/03)	CD Urban (IFTRAB04/05)	CD Rural (IFTRAB04/05)
Number of persons	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than 4	15	24	39	49	28	42
4 or 5	35	24	32	36	33	35
6 or 7	30	32	17	13	22	17
8 or 9	15	10	7	2	12	5
10 or more	5	10	5	...(0.2)	5	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Author; INE, 2004; INE, 2006

Notes:

1. Woodcarver Survey, 2005: Total Carvers n=61; Urban (Pemba City) n = 20.
2. IAF (2002/2003): Second National Income/Expenditure/Household survey, based on a stratified random sample of 8,700 households. 738 households were interviewed in Cabo Delgado, 144 of which were urban and 594 rural.
3. IFTRAB (2004/2005): Labour Force Survey, based on a stratified random sample, of 17,560 households nationally. 1,720 households were interviewed in Cabo Delgado, 600 urban and 1,120 rural.

It could be concluded that this is simply due to definitional differences, given the inclusion of individuals who may be seasonal migrants, a key feature of carver livelihoods. However, structural 'class' aspects may also be important. There is evidence, for instance, that rural carver households are on some measures (quality of house construction, for example) 'less-poor' than the rural population in general as well as being subject to marked differentiation. However, I found little correlation between size of rural carver household and household assets, or the lack of them (see Section 2.2, below). This should not necessarily be surprising. As White (2002) indicates the close correlation between large household size and income poverty measures invariably found in large quantitative surveys, is often absent in smaller-scale qualitative studies. This is an aspect I explore further later.

My survey data also permits an examination of the demographic characteristics of carver households (including the number of dependent children and their

educational attainment, for instance). This provides some greater insight into the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity of carver household composition and possible structural differences between rural and urban dwellers which might underpin their relative wealth or deprivation (see Table 13). What is striking is the remarkable similarity in many of the indicators between urban and rural carver households. The main difference seems to be the greater number of children (particularly girls) in urban households and the relatively high proportion (one-third) of rural carver households which is 'childless'. This is partly a function of the age distribution of carver household heads (see below) in urban areas, but there is also a clear polarisation between relatively large rural households with multiple children and many others comprised solely of adults (both immediate and extended family members).

Table 13: Demographic Characteristics of Carver Households		
	Urban (n=20)	Rural (n=41)
Average household size	5.6	5.6
Average age of head	43	46
Average number of boys (<16 years) (<i>Range</i>)	1.3 (0-4)	1.2 (0-4)
Average number of girls (<16 years) (<i>Range</i>)	1.6 (0-4)	1 (0-4)
Average number of children (< 16 years)	2.5	2.2
Percentage of households with no children	16%	32%
Average number of female adults (16+ years) (<i>Range</i>)	1.6 (0-3)	1.6 (0-6)
Average number of male adults (16+ years) (<i>Range</i>)	1.8 (1-4)	1.8 (1-5)
Percentage of households with adults > 60 years	32%	29%

Source: Carver Household Survey, July/August 2005.

The defining demographic characteristic of the carver households in my survey is that they all appear to be male-headed, an (almost) inevitable outcome given that the focus of the investigation was the Makonde carvers in Cabo Delgado and that

all the carvers are men²¹⁰. This is clearly in contrast to the broader reality of family livelihoods, making my survey findings and IAF and IFTRAB data less directly comparable; both IAF and IFTRAB indicate that about one-fifth of Cabo Delgado households were 'female-headed' (with the share greater in urban areas and the overall proportion rising slightly between the two surveys). Evidence shows that 'female-dominated' households (or households without adult male presence) have more restricted livelihood opportunities and are prone to higher levels of poverty and deprivation than their male counterparts due largely to fewer labour market opportunities (Sender et al 2006). This should be borne in mind when comparing my micro-survey data with provincial data, although I do present disaggregated national household survey data, controlled for gender, as necessary.

A further insight into household structure and dynamics is provided by the civil status of household heads. For rural households, my sample data look broadly comparable with those of the general population (see Table 14). They indicated that of the married rural household heads, 10% were polygamous, but these were not noticeably older or wealthier. There is greater difference in the civil status of urban household heads between my survey and overall provincial data, with a larger proportion of carver household heads being married. However, given that a much greater proportion of female household 'heads' would be expected to be widowed or divorced (about one-third or so in urban Cabo Delgado, according to IFTRAB, 2004/05), this difference is not significant.

²¹⁰ As indicated this is not unique to Makonde carving in Cabo Delgado but is also the case in Tanzania and amongst other East African carving traditions.

Table 14: Civil Status

	Urban Carvers (2005)	Rural Carvers (2005)	Cabo Delgado Urban (IFTRAB04/05)	Cabo Delgado Urban (IFTRAB04/05)
	%	%	%	%
Married	90	83	76	86
Single	0	7	13	6
Divorced/Separated	10	10	7	5
Widowed	0	0	4	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Carver Household Survey (July/August, 2005); INE (2006).

Beall (2002) complains that one of the shortcomings of the livelihoods literature is that it is 'relatively silent on the issue of intra-household dynamics', including the role played by gender in influencing the ability of individual household members to access and command resources, a problem she traces back to early work by Chambers and Conway (1992). In carver households, there is a strict division of labour between male and female roles in relation to carving activities. Women are expected to undertake household tasks, work in the fields and/or contribute to household cash income through handicraft production or informal trading activities. In contrast to urban Tanzania however, where they sometimes help to finish or sell carvings, Makonde women in Cabo Delgado do not normally participate in the woodcarving 'chain'. The carvers, as I have hinted, themselves explain this gender monopoly over carving partly in terms of 'tradition', where the (cultural) division of labour places women as potters and men as carvers, and partly with reference to the pressure of other duties, or a 'lack of interest'. Most, however, at least publicly remain open to the idea of women becoming carvers.

The following comments illustrate these general views:

'As a tradition we are divided in term of type of job, men are carvers and women are potteries. The men express the feelings in the wood and women do so by pottery. And we agree that women can become wood carvers if they decide to do this work'.

AK, Group Discussion, Association Arte Makonde, Mpeme, (18th July 2005)

'Women are interested and are able to become wood carvers but they have no courage to join this kind of job and also they don't give importance to this. My opinion is that it could be good thing to incorporate them in this kind of job. Once, we'd an experience in this cooperative. A woman joined the Cooperative for apprenticeship and she was able to do any thing but she abandoned this job due to the excess of work for her, because she had to share two jobs at the same time, the household jobs and carving apprenticeship, so she decide to stay home looking after the household jobs.

PS, Group Discussion, Bela Baia Cooperative, Pemba (9th July 2005).

Age, Origin and Migration

The average age of woodcarver household heads might be expected to be significantly higher than that of the general population due to the time needed to acquire the necessary expertise in sculpting, which is developed through extended apprenticeships. Although there are small differences in both mean and median age (with the carvers 'older' on both measures), the small sample size makes it difficult to make precise inferences. Like the IAF and IFTRAB provincial level data, the carver survey indicates no difference in average age between rural and urban respondents. The purposive sampling of more experienced carvers itself will certainly have exaggerated any age difference (between carvers household heads and that of the general population), but the tendency for many more of the carvers to be returning migrants (see Section 2.2, below), will also have been an influence. There were a relatively large number of 'young' carvers (that is <30 years of age) in the urban sample, all but one of whom was a member of a single cooperative (Bela Baia). Selection of interviewees was determined in discussion with the Secretary who himself fell into this age range (in contrast of those in the other urban cooperatives). Observation of participants in the Group Discussion at Bela Baia confirmed their relative 'youthfulness'²¹¹. The issue of group structure and dynamics is pursued further later.

²¹¹ A later field visit (in May 2010) indicated that membership at this particular cooperative had been relatively unstable, certainly compared to that of the other similar-sized cooperative in Pemba (Mpingo), and that major schisms had opened up.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 demonstrate that the age *distribution* of carvers in the survey sample is noticeably different to that of the general population, and is almost 'bi-modal'. Proportionally more of the full-time carvers from the three 'urban' cooperatives in Pemba city were under 40 years of age (see above). However there is also a larger share of carvers in the older age groups, than is the case for the male population of Cabo Delgado as a whole (INE, 2003).

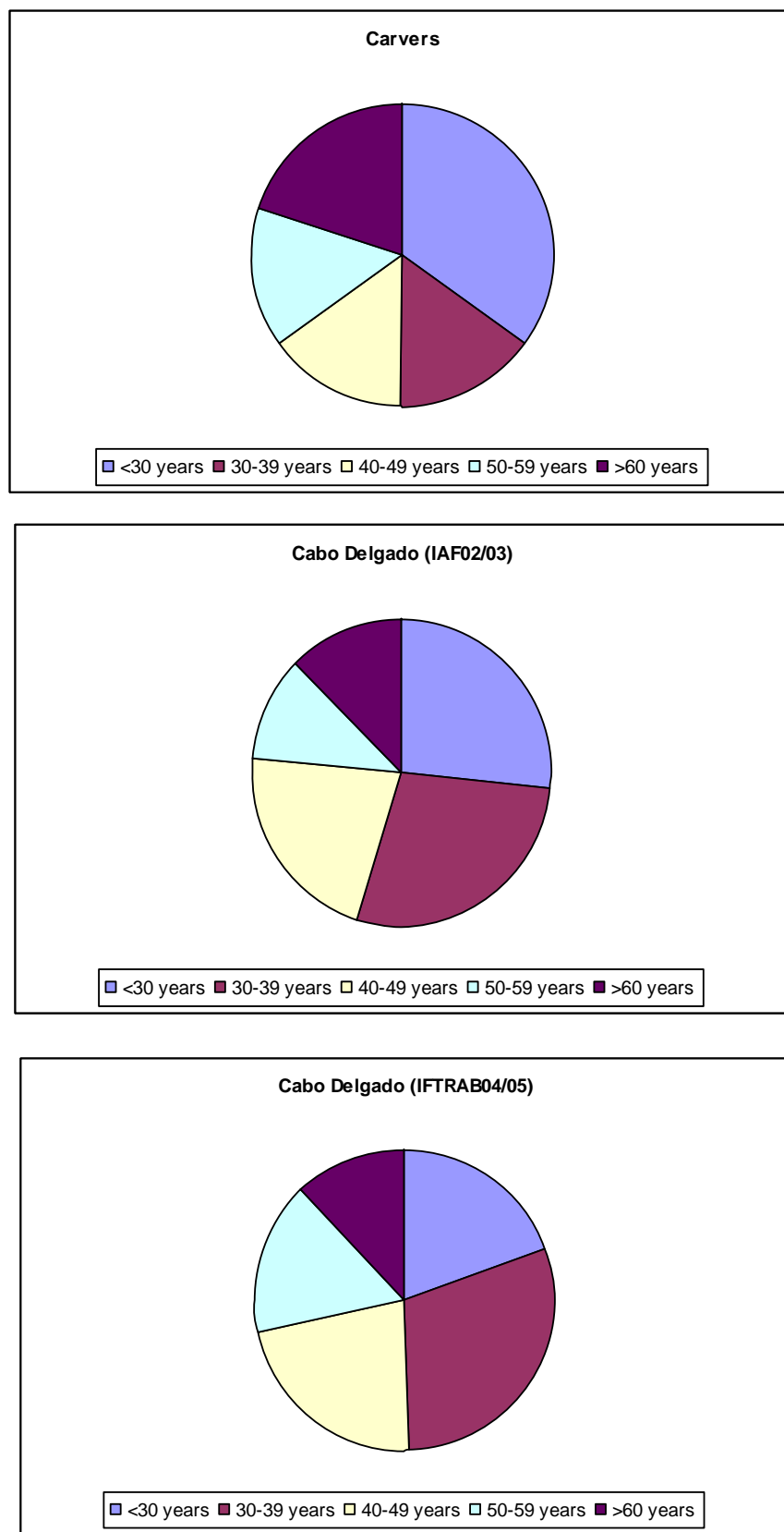


Figure 3: Age Distribution of Urban Household Heads (For sources: see Table 13)

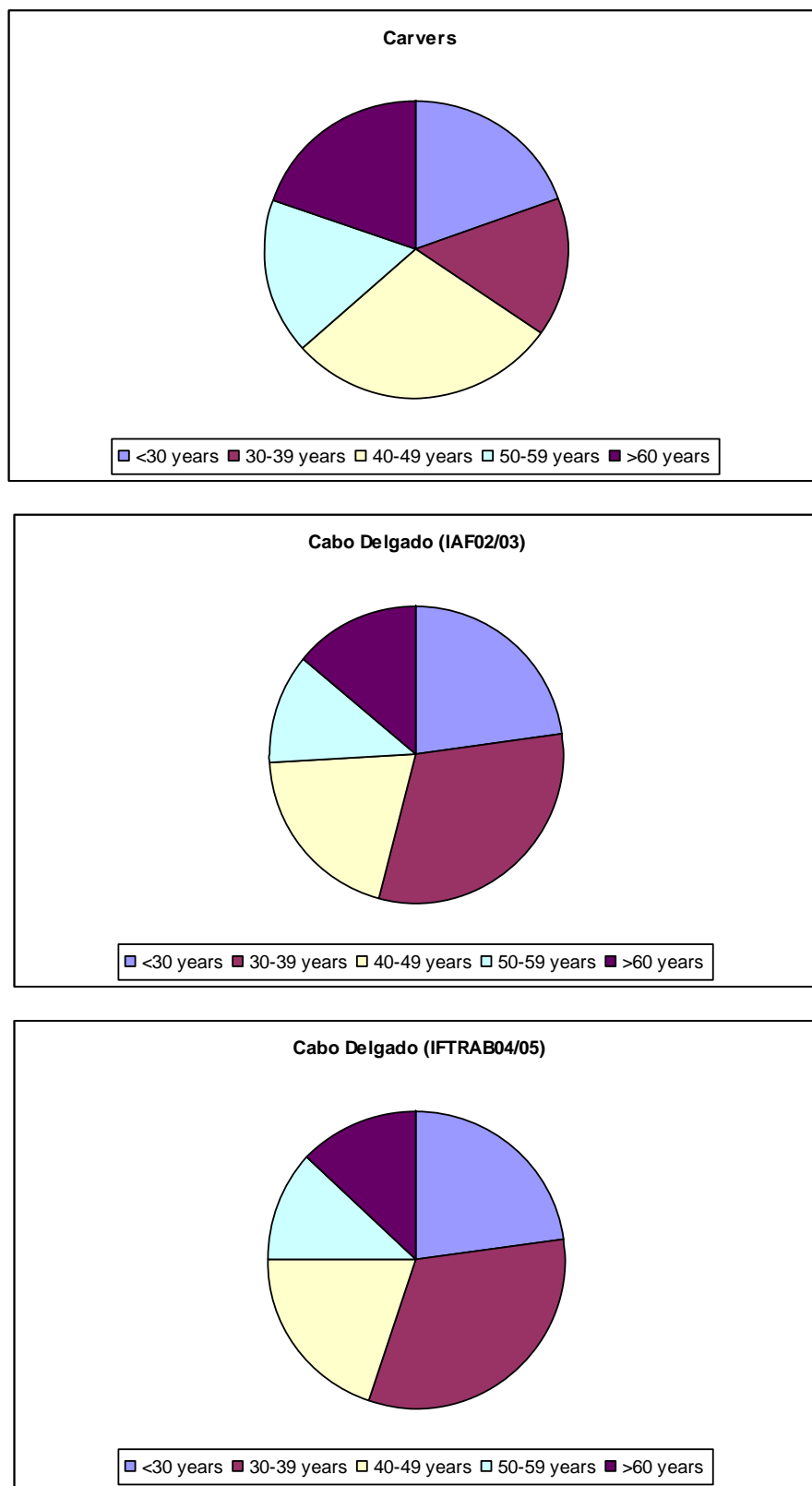


Figure 4: Age Distribution of Rural Household Heads (For sources: see Table 13)

Regarding place of origin, there is a remarkable (although not surprising, given the largely kinship-based transmission of carving expertise) degree of homogeneity between the carvers. The vast majority of carvers in the survey (80%) were born in Mueda district, with most others originating from elsewhere in Cabo Delgado (although none, interestingly, from Pemba city, although one-third now live and work there); four carvers were born in Tanzania and one in Maputo. Group homogeneity appears to be largely a construct of the barriers to entry to carving in terms of the restricted access to and cost of apprenticeships (to ‘non-relatives’), reinforced by a deep ‘cultural connection’ to the work²¹². Chapter 7 takes this discussion further.

Over 90% of carver household heads currently living in Cabo Delgado were born there, a roughly similar proportion to the general population. A small, but significant proportion of carvers were born outside of the country (Tanzania). The provincial level data do not provide any information on the length of time in current location or indicate whether episodes of migration had occurred. Most of the Mueda-born carvers have migrated at some point in their lives to either Pemba or Tanzania, either to learn to carve and/or directly in search of better livelihood opportunities²¹³. This degree of mobility is in contrast with that of provincial household heads in general, but corroborates broader qualitative evidence on outward and return migration from Mueda and from Cabo Delgado by the Makonde (see Chapter 2 on historical trends in carver migration and Chapter 4 for a discussion of more general patterns of displacement of the Makonde from Cabo Delgado). Less than a quarter of all carver household heads has ‘never left their original location’ (implying that three-quarters have migrated either temporarily or permanently). INE (2003), in contrast, indicates that the proportion of ‘local heads’ amongst the rural population in Cabo Delgado

²¹² The latter was frequently emphasised during the Group Discussions and is echoed in Kingdon’s work on the Makonde carvers in Dar es Salaam (Kingdon, 2002; 2005a; 2005b). See also West and Sharpes (2002).

²¹³ One quarter of Mueda-born carvers learnt to carve in Tanzania and a further 10% in Pemba (Woodcarver Survey, 2005).

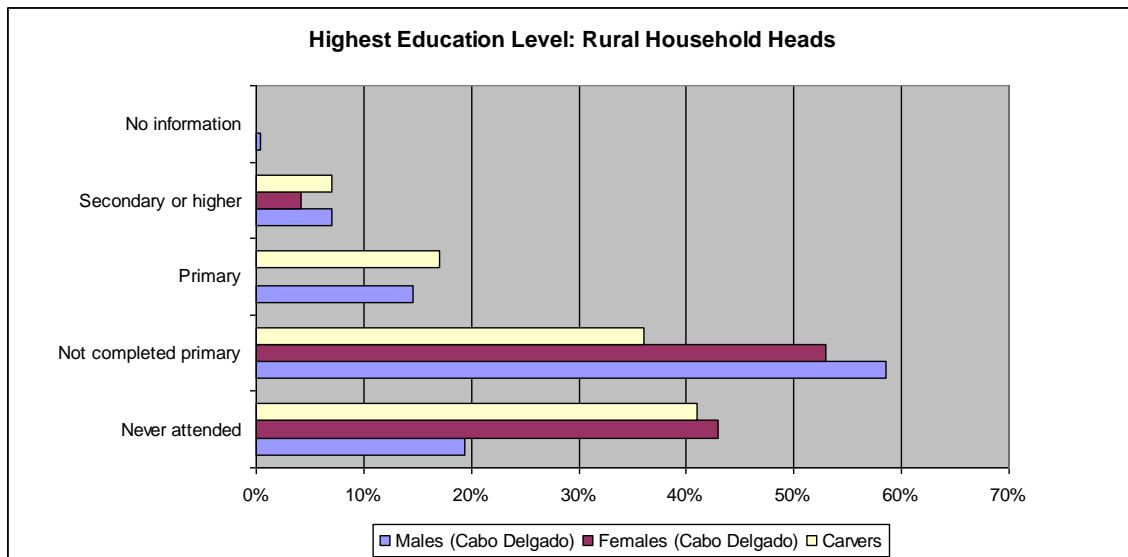
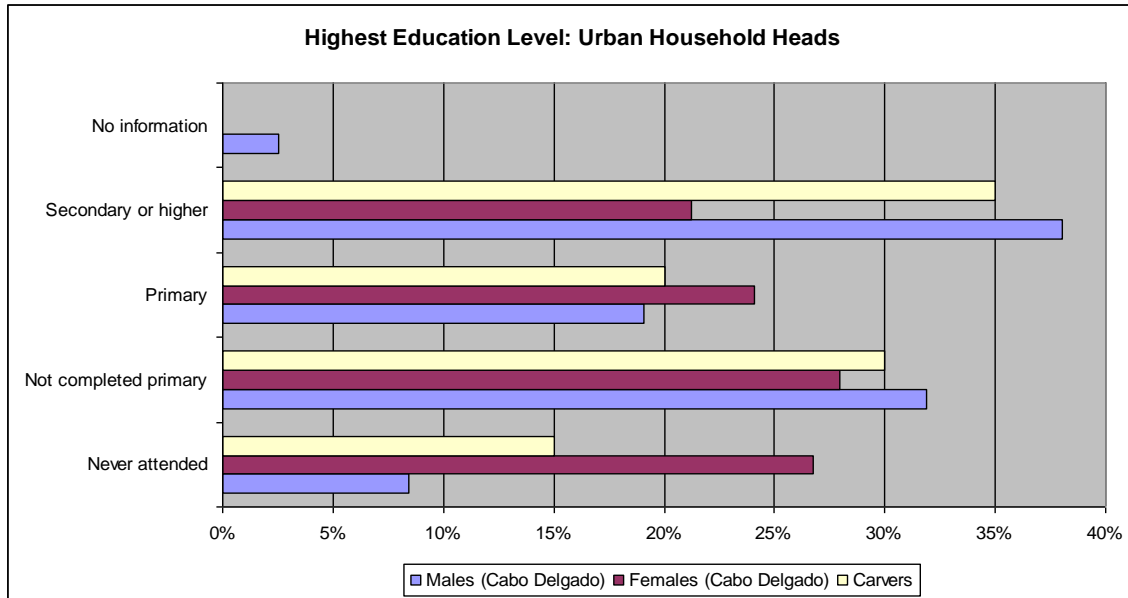
was about 90% and, in urban areas, 60%, although it is recognised that national surveys are generally poor at capturing migration episodes.

6.2.2 Carver Households: How poor are they?

Carver Households: Educational Attainment

A key poverty characteristic is the inability to send children to school (Sender et al, 2006; Howe and McKay, 2007) and, indeed, limited access to education more broadly is associated both with poverty and the scope available for diversification.

An analysis of educational attainment suggests that the carvers exhibit a fair degree of heterogeneity in socio-economic terms, indicating that aggregate comparisons (between all woodcarvers and the general population) are a little problematic. While about one-third of carver household heads have never attended school, the ITFRAB survey (2004/2005) suggests that the equivalent figure for the general Cabo Delgado population is about half this (17%). However, it is clear from my data that low access to education amongst the carvers is purely a 'rural' phenomenon. The educational attainment of the 'urban' (Pemba-based) carvers looks comparable with male urban dwellers more generally (see Figure 5). Indeed, in educational terms, the rural-urban distinction appears very important. There is a clear gender dimension here as well, both in terms of access and achievement; the IFTRAB data (see Figure 5) indicates that 96% of female household heads in rural Cabo Delgado did not attend school or complete their primary education; the urban equivalent is about 55%.

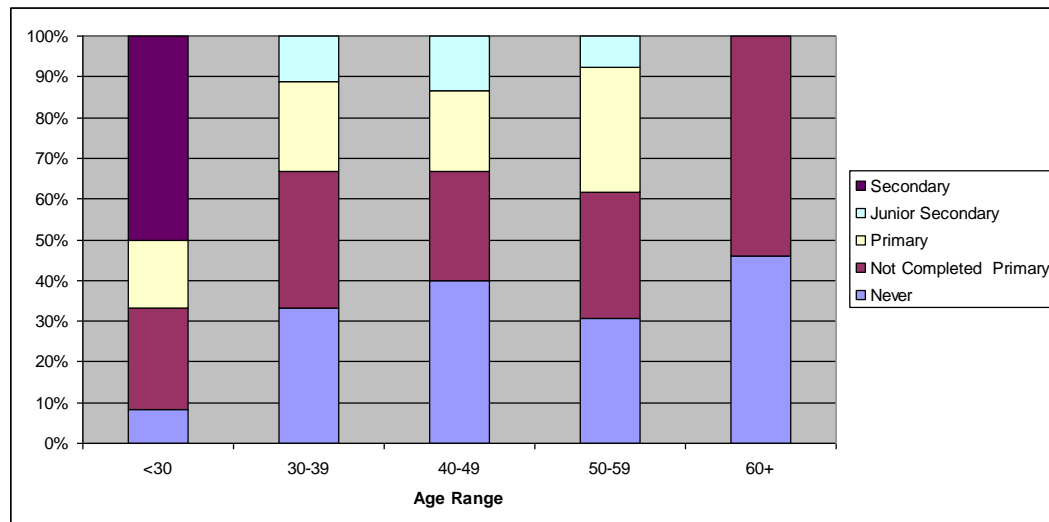


Source: IFTRAB (2004/05); Carver Household Survey (2005).

Figure 5: Educational Attainment by Location and Gender

Perhaps more importantly, as Figures 5, 6 and 8 serve to illustrate, there is a wide variation in formal educational attainment *between* carvers. My survey data suggest this is partly age-related (most apparent when comparing the youngest and the oldest carvers), suggesting that the former were able to access educational opportunities denied to older carvers. Indeed, there does appear to be a statistically significant negative correlation between carver age and years

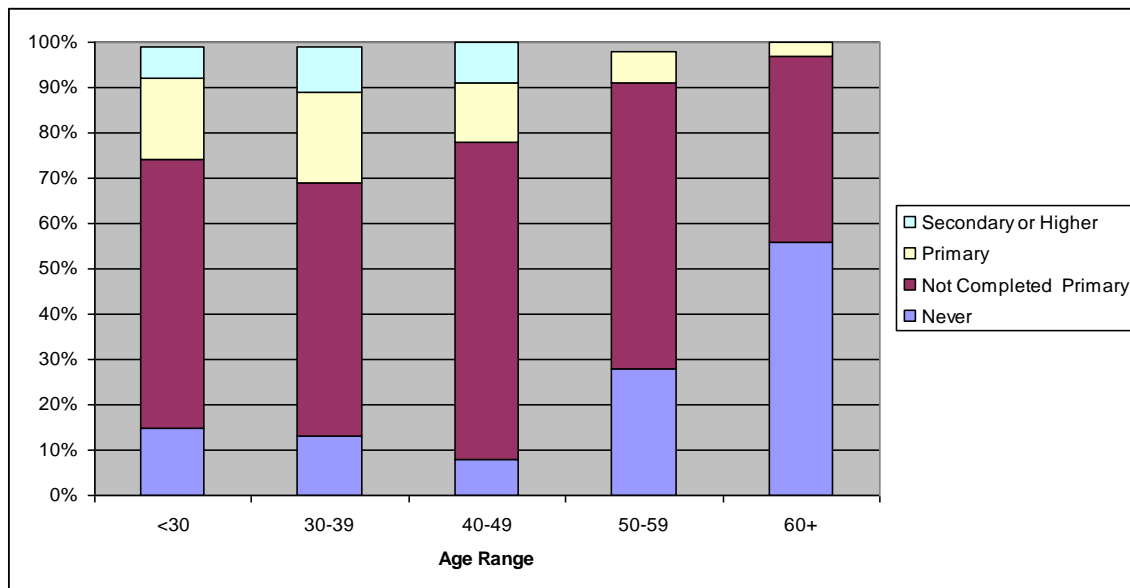
spent at school, which is marginally stronger for the carvers based in ‘rural’ areas²¹⁴. This is likely to be the combined result of the disruption to educational provision prior to 1992, which began with the liberation struggle and continued through post-Independence conflict, and the subsequent growth in the availability of school places, particularly at secondary level. Disaggregating the IFTRAB survey data to control for age and gender suggests that the main differences between carvers and non-carvers is in the higher educational attainment of younger carvers (under 30 years of age) and those carvers in the 50-59 year age group. For the urban carvers, there is a significant link between educational attainment (measured in terms of both highest school level reached and number of school years completed) and the ownership of ‘assets’ (see Section 2.2 below).



Source: Carver Household Survey (2005)

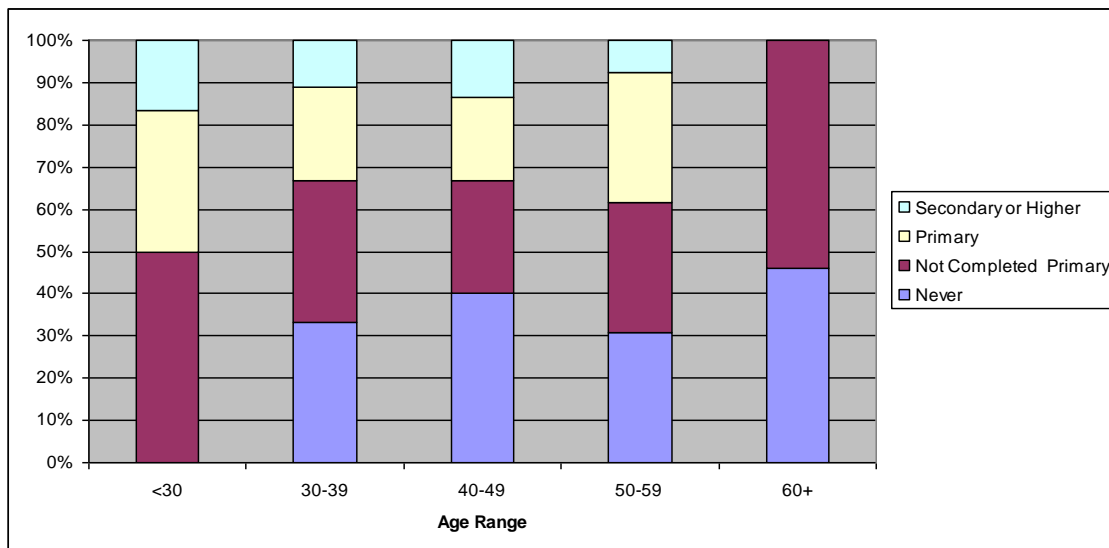
Figure 6: Educational Attainment of Carvers by Age Group

²¹⁴ Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.394 (-0.460 for rural carvers alone), significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), (n=41).



Source: IFTRAB (2004/05)

Figure 7: Educational Attainment of Male Household Heads in Cabo Delgado by Age Group



Source: Carver Household Survey (2005)

Figure 8: Educational Attainment of Rural Carvers by Age Group

Carver Households: Poverty, Assets and Stratification

The donor-driven 'extractive' model of development pursued by the Mozambican government has had a particularly adverse impact on Cabo Delgado (and its adjoining northern province of Niassa). Natural resources in the province have been heavily exploited for timber extraction and tourism with limited benefits to the poor. Little job creation arises from this pattern of development; in consequence, levels of poverty and inequality in the province remain high and have arguably increased in recent years.

I have discussed earlier (in Chapters 2 and 5) the problem of relying simply on a per capita income-expenditure-consumption-based indicator of poverty to measure what is in essence a multi-dimensional concept (Sahn and Stifel, 2003; Sumner, 2007; Alkire and Foster, 2011). In consequence, the use of focused, smaller scale qualitative studies to yield information that is difficult to capture using conventional surveys is now advocated as a complementary approach in poverty analysis, as is the use of various forms of asset 'indices' (Sender et al, 2006). Alongside information on household and individual characteristics and carver livelihoods, my household survey facilitated the collection of a wide range of data on housing quality, access to water, sanitation and electricity, ownership of a range of basic consumer goods and direct indicators of well-being (including number of meals and types of food consumed). Compared to possible measurement and cost problems associated with 'poverty-line' surveys, and the comparability and consistency issues arising from 'participatory' approaches, these indicators proved to be fairly straightforward to identify and collect at individual or household level and are likely to be sufficiently robust for my needs (Sender, 2002; Sumner, 2007). However, O'Laughlin's (2010) caution about the possibly misleading nature of 'asset indices' – which try 'to describe economic inequality purely as an outcome' – and the way that they can cloud 'issues of class' (28) is worth noting here. Indeed, while these indices offer one way of establishing the socio-economic status of individuals, they do not provide enough information for exploring the concept of class as 'relation'. An awareness of the

limitations of any form of (inevitably) arbitrary index and the need to move beyond these in terms of additional 'qualitative' approaches has helped frame my methodology (Chapter 5), and the contextualisation of carver livelihood 'trajectories' (Chapter 7).

One of the best indicators of household wealth and poverty in Mozambique is the material used for building houses (de Vletter, 2007), specifically the materials used for walls, roofing and floors, although there are regional variations which may reflect particular preferences and historical factors. Tables 15, 16 and 17 offer a comparison between carver survey statistics and provincial data from IAF and IFTRAB surveys. Although there appear to be some definitional or reporting inconsistencies between household and provincial data in certain categories (cement floors and wood/zinc walling, being the most obvious) and between IAF and IFTRAB data (on roof type, in particular), a number of interesting conclusions can be drawn. Over half the rural carvers live in dwellings with 'bad construction' (Howe & McKay, 2006), that is houses with thatch roof, non-brick walls and an earth floor²¹⁵. Perhaps surprisingly, given their relatively poorer educational attainment, the rural carvers on average appear to have better flooring ('only' two-thirds have dirt floors, compared to 96% of rural dwellers province-wide) and roof materials (80% have thatch roofs, again compared to 96% province-wide). The quality of housing occupied by carvers in urban areas is certainly much better than that of rural carver households (with only 20% suffering from 'bad' construction), but is broadly comparable with that of urban dwellers in Cabo Delgado generally (certainly in terms of roofing and wall-type).

²¹⁵ An estimated 54% of rural households live in dwellings with 'bad construction', compared with 20% of urban households (Woodcarver Survey, 2005).

Table 15: Main flooring type

	Urban Carvers (2005)	Rural Carvers (2005)	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Urban	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Rural
	%	%	%	%
Ceramic Tiles	10	0	Nr	0
Cement	5	0	...	0
Wood	15	0	50	4
Bamboo/Sticks	20	0	nr	0
Dirt	15	34	nr	0
	35	66	49	96
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: same as Table 12

Table 16: Roof Type

	Urban Carvers (2005)	Rural Carvers (2005)	IAF HH CD (2002/2003) ALL	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Urban	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Rural
Wood	0	3	nr	0	0
Zinc/Corrugated Metal	35	15	4	33	4
Ceramic Tile	0	0	nr	6	0
Leaves/grass/ bamboo	60	80	94	54	96
Lusalite	5	3	2	7	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: same as Table 12

Table 17: Wall Type

	Urban Carvers (2005)	Rural Carvers (2005)	IAF HH CD (2002/2003) ALL	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Urban	IFTRAB (2004/2005) Rural
Cement/bricks	25	7	17	30	11
Sticks/mud	60	76	82	68	88
Wood/zinc	15	17	...	2	0.0
Bamboo/Palms	0	0	1	...	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: same as Table 12.

Notes:

1. nr = not reported as separate category; 3. ... 0>, <0.5.

Individually, these indicators are useful, but the degree of deprivation facing individual carver households and potential stratification can be further explored by combining them into some form of household asset or possessions index. Essentially an asset or possessions 'index' is built up from a range of indicators acting as some sort of proxy for poverty, linked together using an appropriate

weighting scheme. Some subjectivity in the selection of indicators to include (and exclude) and in setting the weights to use is inevitable, but should not be overly problematic for small-scale, context-specific applications like mine. I undertook some exploratory Principal Component Analysis (PCA) on the data set in an attempt to identify and aggregate ‘asset’ variables, but with results that cannot be considered sufficiently statistically robust²¹⁶.

Table 18: Woodcarver Households: Indicators of Living Conditions

<i>Households with</i>	Component weight	Rural (n=41)	Urban (n=20)
Floor Type (Dirt=0; Others=1)	1	34%	65%
Roof Type (Grass=0; Others=1)	1	20%	40%
Wall Type (Bamboo/Palm or Sticks/Mud=0; Others=1)	1	24%	40%
Number of Rooms (>2=1, otherwise=0)	1	54%	47%
Public Electricity (Yes=1; No=0)	1	2%	15%
Piped Water (Yes=1; No=0)	1	5%	35%

Source: Carver Household Survey, July/August 2005.

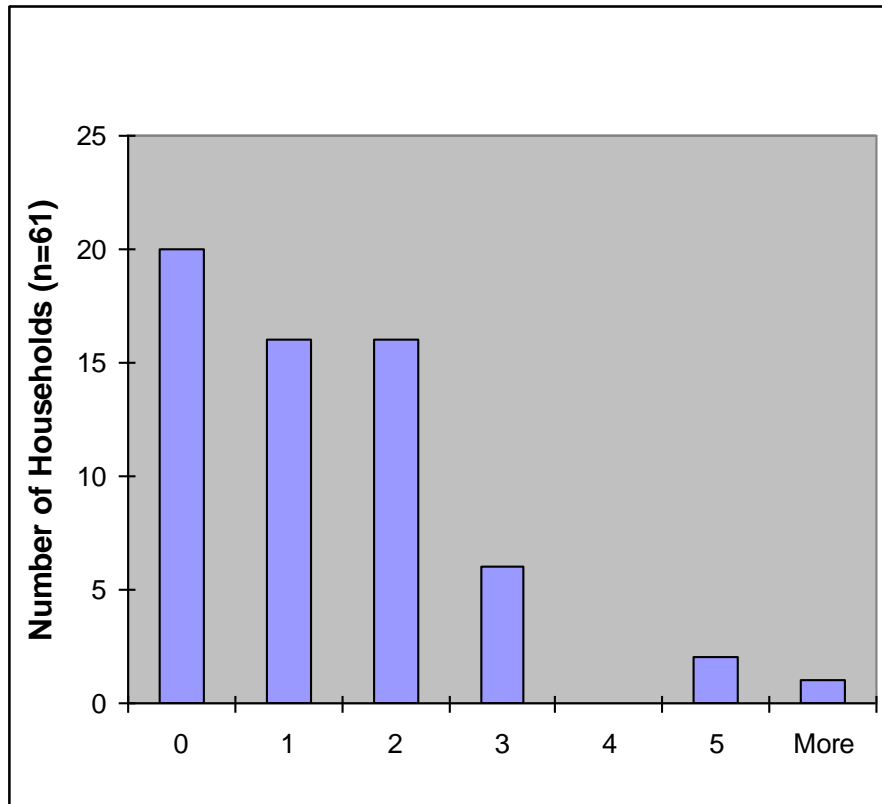
Notes:

1. Provincial urban (IAF02): No of Rooms (83%); Public Electricity (11%); Piped Water (35%)
2. Provincial rural (IAF02): No of Rooms (60%); Public Electricity (0%); Piped Water (5%)

The first ‘asset index’ is one based on the quality of living conditions (see Table 18), with the various indicators converted to binary variables. These elements are all included by Zeller et al (2006) as housing indicators recommended for use in the ‘assessment of relative poverty’, and appear objective and unambiguous. They were all given equal weighting in the ‘Living Conditions Index’, although this arguably undervalues electricity and piped water connections as ‘wealth’ indicators. Figure 9 shows that the living conditions of the vast majority of carver households is poor; the mean ‘living conditions score’ is 1.34 (range 0-6), with

²¹⁶ On the basis of both sample size (in excess of 300 is recommended) and ratio of participants to variables, my survey data were unlikely to produce a reliable factor solution (Field, 2005: 638-640).

almost a third of households having a 'score' of zero. A small number of carvers (about 5%), on the other hand, live in homes of much higher quality and with access to public utilities (mains electricity and/or piped water), suggesting access to better livelihood opportunities and in consequence higher living standards.

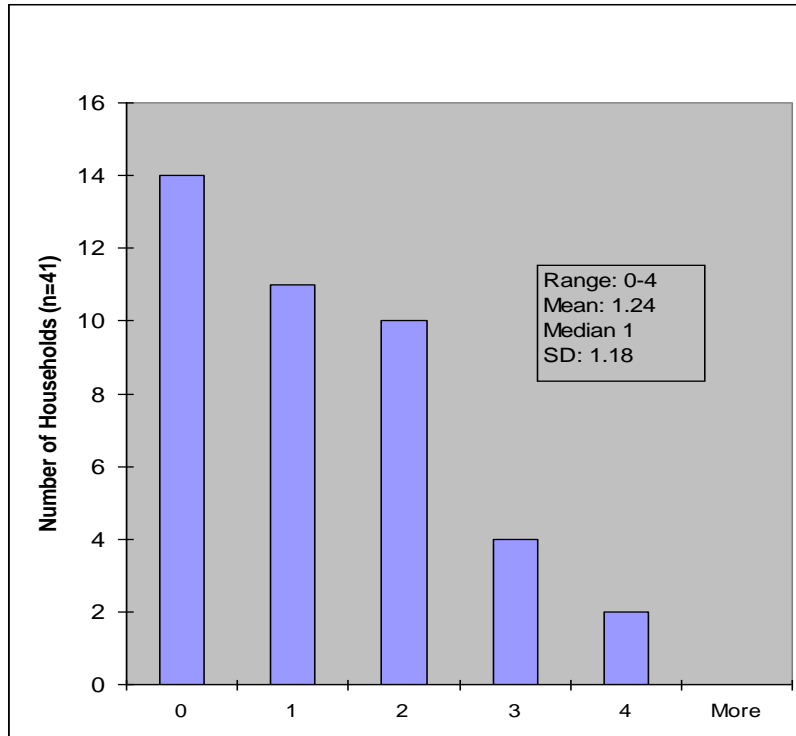


Source: Derived from data in Table 18.

Figure 9: Living Condition Scores (All Carvers)

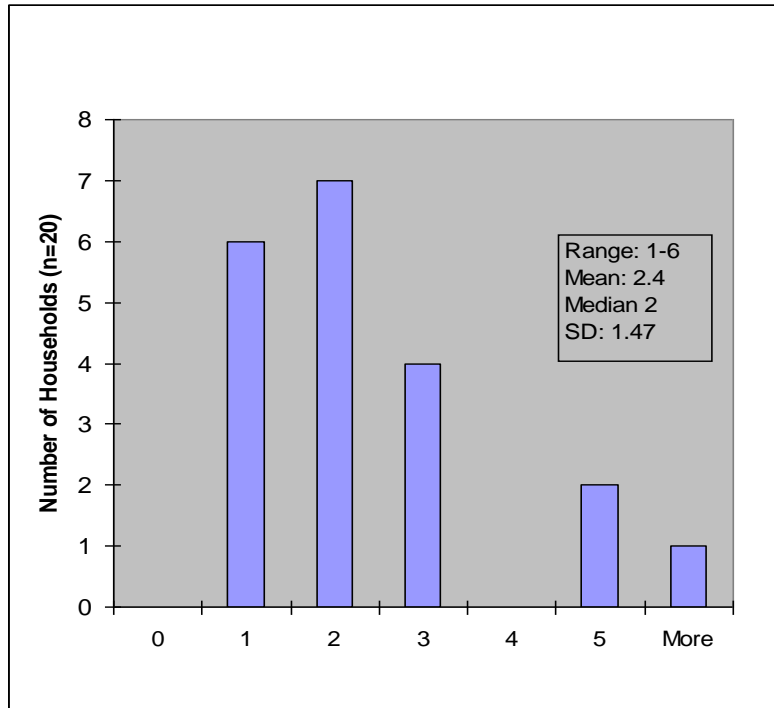
It is instructive to explore whether (as might be expected) there is a systematic difference between the living conditions facing rural and urban households and to what extent there are similar degrees of heterogeneity. Figures 10 and 11 depict the distribution of 'living condition scores' amongst rural and urban carvers, respectively. The average 'score' for urban households is almost twice that of rural households, with no urban dwellers falling into the lowest grouping (ie with zero 'score') suggesting all have made some improvement to housing 'quality', however minor. However, the standard deviation is larger for urban households,

suggesting greater stratification between them. The three ‘wealthiest’ households are in Pemba (scores of 5 or 6), with all three having multiple sources of income. The biographical interviews with two of these household heads provided further insights into their particular livelihood trajectories (see Section 4).



Source: Derived from data in Table 18.

Figure 10: Rural Living Conditions Scores



Source: Derived from data in Table 18.

Figure 11: Urban Living Condition Scores

The second index is built from data on household possessions and is designed to focus more closely on household assets²¹⁷. Table 19 sets out the elements included in the 'Household Possessions Index' and their frequency distribution, with values derived from my survey data. This is similar to the index used by Sender, Oya and Cramer (2006), but modified to make it usable with combined urban and rural households.

Although the sample of carver households may, overall, be better off on average than the general population, there is a similarly marked difference between urban and rural dwellers in ownership of household possessions. In constructing the index I have again applied equal weighting to the various indicators, which appears reasonable. However, because it uses ownership of possessions which

²¹⁷ The intention is to explore different dimensions of carver wealth and poverty; the two indices are correlated, but imperfectly so (the correlation coefficient is 0.33).

could be of greatly variable quality (a radio, a clock), rather than their value, differentials in wealth are likely to be underestimated²¹⁸.

Table 19: Woodcarver Household Possessions

<i>Households with</i>	Component weight	Rural (n=41)	Urban (n=20)
Radio	1	67%	88%
Lamp (Paraffin)	1	0%	7%
Clock	1	6%	20%
Bed (with Frame)	1	10%	33%
Shoes for all Adults	1	35%	55%
Bicycle	1	47%	65%

Source: Household Survey, July/August 2005.

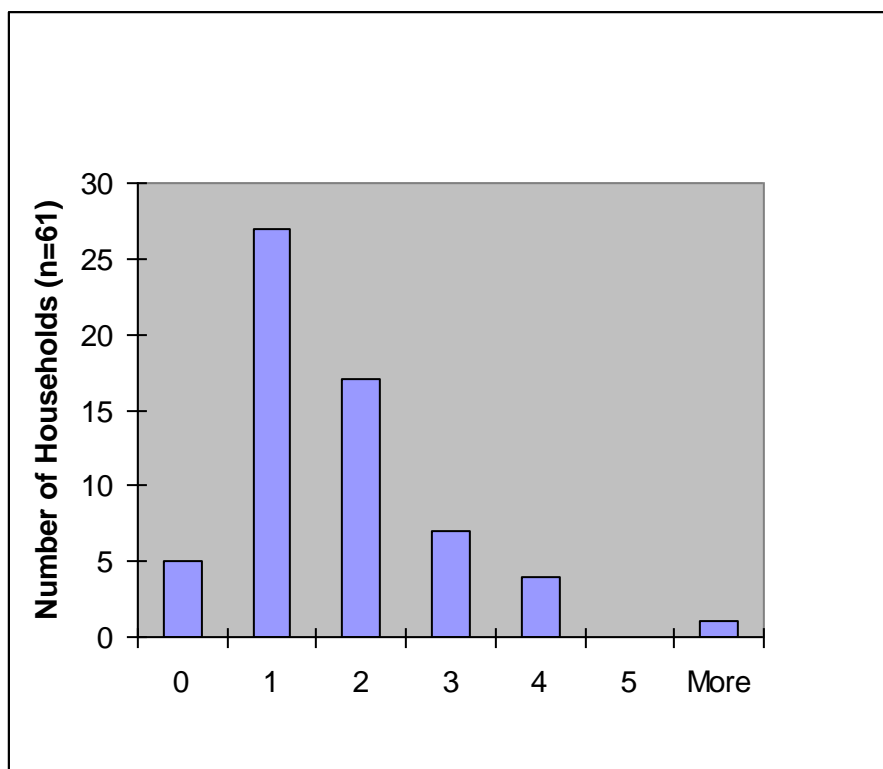
Notes:

1. Bicycle ownership: (IAF02) Cabo Delgado (24%), National (28%); (IOF08) Cabo Delgado (43%), National (38%).

2. Radio Ownership: (IAF02) Cabo Delgado (43%), National (46%); (IOF08) Cabo Delgado (45%); National (46%).

The average possessions score (at 1.70) is relatively low and indicates that many carver households (see Figure 12) lack some of the most basic household assets. Like the 'living conditions index' it also illustrates that there is great variation between households. While over a half of households had possession scores of either 0 or 1 (indicating at best ownership of *one* of these assets), one in twelve carver households registered Possessions Scores of 4 or more.

²¹⁸ Of course attempting to value these possessions would have undermined some of the benefits of simplicity, objectivity and robustness that non-money-metric measures have. I did not ask whether households owned more than one radio, clock, bicycle etc, which again would have been useful. Finally, I did not test the validity of these indicators (as a measure of relative wealth or poverty) by asking for guidance from the carvers themselves, either before or after their selection.



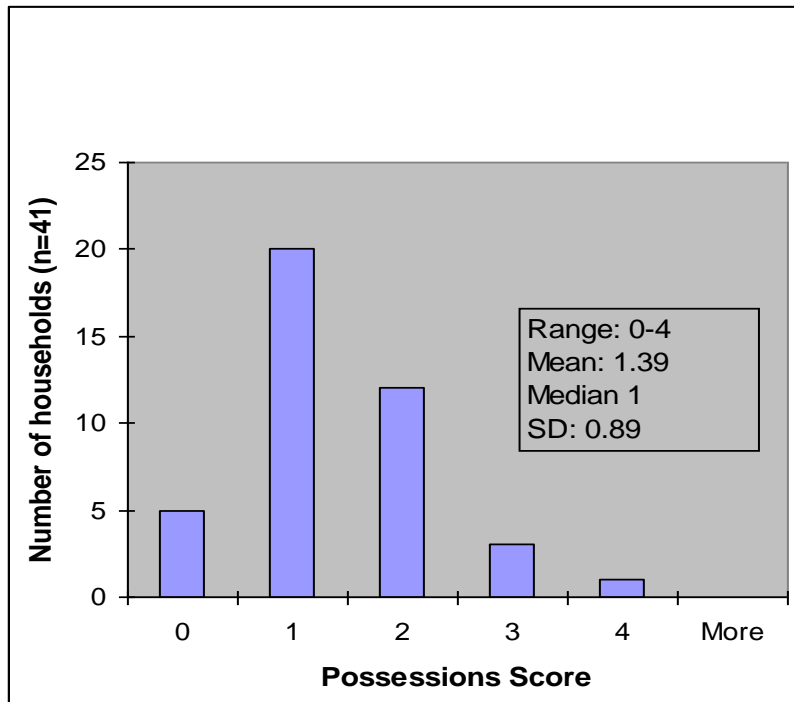
Source: Derived from data in Table 19.

Figure 12: Distribution of Possessions Scores (All Carvers)

The stark contrast between rural and urban carvers in terms of household possessions is also apparent (see Figures 13 and 14). The average possessions score for urban households is 2.3 (median, 2 and range 1 to 6); as expected, this is significantly higher than for rural households where the average score is 1.39 (median, 1 and range 0 to 4). The high level of poverty experienced by rural carver households is also illustrated by looking at livestock ownership²¹⁹. Some 44% of rural carvers do not own livestock of any kind; while, of the 56% who do own animals, almost three-quarters own only chickens. This compares badly with livestock ownership of 66% amongst the rural population in Cabo Delgado as a whole, with a much higher proportion of these owning higher 'value' livestock like goats or pigs (Boughton et al, 2006; de Vletter, 2007). The significantly higher

²¹⁹ Livestock ownership is widely recognised as a good indicator of rural poverty (and wealth) in Mozambique and elsewhere (de Vletter, 2007; Zeller et al, 2005). A key characteristic of those considered to be amongst the 'chronic poor' is that they are much less likely to own livestock of any kind, not even chickens let alone goats, pigs or cattle (Howe and McKay, 2007).

standard deviation for Possession Scores amongst urban carver households (in our survey, those in Pemba) reinforces the conclusion that there is a relatively greater degree of heterogeneity amongst urban dwellers than amongst rural carvers.



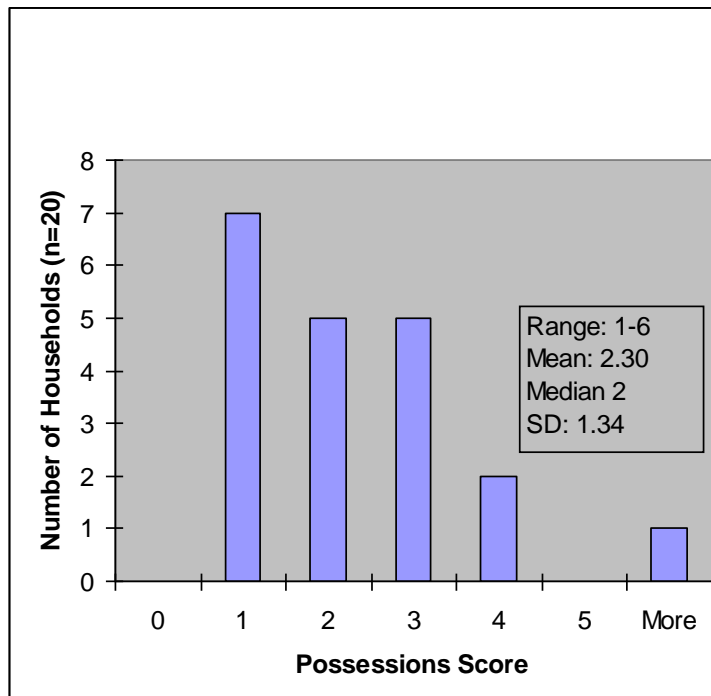
Source: Derived from data in Table 19.

Figure 13: Distribution of Possessions Scores: Rural Carvers

One other significant finding in my survey is the important connection between education and household wealth. Across the entire carver sample there appears to be a close correlation between level and duration of schooling and possessions scores²²⁰. The relationship is much more pronounced for urban households, where education may offer the opportunity to better access ‘formal’ sector employment opportunities that are unlikely to be widely available, if at all, to rural dwellers. However, as both Reardon et al (2000) and Barrett et al (2001) point out, for rural households in Africa there seems to be a clear association

²²⁰ Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.496 for school years (0.502 for school level), significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), n=49.

between education (beyond primary level) and participation in non-farm opportunities, at least those with higher and regular returns, although both stress causation could run in either direction. This echoes the findings of Handa et al (2004) and others which suggest a close link between educational attainment and other measures of wealth and poverty in Mozambique as a whole.



Source: Derived from data in Table 19.

Figure 14: Distribution of Possessions Scores: Urban Carvers

For the poor, access to educational opportunities in Mozambique has until recently been limited and uneven, and beyond primary school level still is²²¹. It does appear from the data to be an important cause of stratification between carvers, but it is apparent from the empirical data that access to education has itself been influenced by circumstances and contingent events (including

²²¹ Intuitively, a high dependency ratio might be expected to be associated with greater deprivation. My survey revealed a relatively small number of carver households from which children of primary school age were not participating in formal education, but this was not directly correlated with low possessions scores.

displacement and migration) as well as the often limited availability of school infrastructure. As should now be becoming clear, contemporary carver livelihoods – both collectively and individually – cannot easily be reduced to the stereotypical. On the contrary, each individual livelihood ‘trajectory’ has been uniquely framed by broader historical and economic processes, as well as social relations, and continues to be so.

In the next section of this chapter I offer further empirical evidence on the scope offered by woodcarving, in practical terms, to generate income and to support the diversification of household livelihoods and look at the degree of differentiation (measured in terms of average household possessions) between the various carving groups. Discussion of the way in which the intergenerational transmission of carving skills has acted to protect carver livelihoods and underpinned the emergence of a coherent Makonde carving ‘social network’ is presented.

6.3 Making a Living: returns from carving and livelihood ‘diversification’

As discussed earlier (in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5), the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) purported to offer an insight into the ways in which people actively ‘make their living’ and to lay the foundations for policy interventions aimed at poverty reduction. However, while the tools offered by the livelihoods framework – with its focus on ‘assets’ and resources – may have some usefulness in poverty analysis (and in its support for a move away from money-metric approaches to measuring poverty), its unquestioned and uncritical adoption within broader development discourse has been problematic. From the evidence provided thus far it is difficult to characterise the Makonde woodcarvers as ‘strategic managers of complex asset portfolios’ (Moser, 1998: 5) which they can mobilise to secure their livelihoods. Woodcarving in Cabo Delgado is clearly historically and culturally embedded and it is this (rather than any opportunistic attempt at ‘risk minimisation’ or livelihood ‘diversification’) that has led to its

persistence over time. Further, my empirical findings suggest that the returns from carving activities are, for the most part, insufficient to sustain the reproduction of carver households.

In my earlier discussion of the woodcarving 'chain' (Section 1.3, this chapter), I emphasised the irregular and highly uncertain nature of carving sales, which has led to a large accumulation of finished, unsold items in carver houses and cooperative storerooms. This uncertainty is likely to be a pervasive part of the economics of craft production, but is particularly problematic for carving. While raw material costs represent a very small proportion of the (achieved) price of the carvings, with most of the value arising from carver skills and the carving process itself, this represents a substantial 'investment' of money (and time) in an activity with often unrealised (and possibly unrealisable) returns.

My survey included a question on income from carving over the previous twelve months, but barely one half of respondents were willing or able to provide information on this²²². This was linked to questions on categories of buyers and the numbers of carvings sold which enabled me to judge the consistency of responses. However, as the previous discussion on wealth and poverty indicators highlighted, the data in Table 20 (below) can only be considered an imperfect measure of the level of carver incomes and are certainly only a 'snapshot' recording of what appeared to be a relatively poor year for 'clients'. Two-thirds of carvers admitted producing less than 10 carvings in the previous twelve months, with almost 40% of rural carvers saying that they sold no carvings at all over the period.

²²² The survey question asked: 'How much money have you received for your carvings over the last year? I indicated earlier some of the issues associated with gathering data on 'income' in this way, including problems of recall, particularly for many of the rural carvers where no written records are kept, deliberate 'under or over-reporting' and/or unwillingness to divulge this sort of information to researchers.

Only two carvers reported 2005 as being their ‘best year’ for sales, with about one third indicating that they sold most carvings in either 2003 or 2004²²³. Notwithstanding these qualifications, the data in Table 20 shows very clearly the low level of returns to carving over most of the sample, while it also indicates that these incomes are highly uneven and differ greatly between urban and rural carvers. According to the sub-sample providing information, almost two-thirds of carvers earned less than MZM 3 million (US\$120) from carving sales in the previous year, with the vast majority of these in rural areas. Table 20 indicates that the average income over the year was \$128 for rural carvers and \$360 for those based in Pemba²²⁴; it also shows that some carvers were earning substantially more (and others much less) than this²²⁵. The ‘outlier’ here (with reported earnings of about US\$2,000 in 2004/2005) is a Pemba-based carver who is very clearly an ‘accumulator’ and had the highest Household Possession score (see Figure 14). His is one of the livelihood ‘trajectories’ presented in Section 4, below.

²²³ Given that the survey was conducted in July/August 2005, this does not compare like with like; nevertheless the peak period of sales, based on international tourist visitors (May-August), had largely passed.

²²⁴ The formal sector minimum monthly wage in Mozambique in 2005 was MZM 1,277,000 (\$51) for non-agricultural workers, but only MZM 918,000 (\$38) for those employed in agriculture. In comparison, average monthly carver incomes of between \$10-30 appear rather poor.

²²⁵ Estimates of the net returns to labour for carvers can also be approached via the value of individual carvings. In July 2005 this researcher purchased a pair of skeletons in Mueda for MZM 150,000 (US\$7), which had taken three days to produce, while a *bindamu* bought in Idovo village involved seven days of work, but cost MZM 100,000 (US\$4). These transacted prices were as specified by the carvers concerned. These (and other) examples imply potential returns ranging from US\$0.50-\$2 per day, which at the upper end compares well with minimum daily rates in formal sector employment, but sales are often highly infrequent.

Table 20: Annual income from carving in previous year (2004/2005)				
	Urban (MZM) (n=10)	Urban (US\$) (n=10)	Rural (MZM) (n=21)	Rural (US\$) (n=21)
Mean	8,995,000	360	3,203,000	128
Median	4,500,000	180	2,300,000	92
Maximum	50,000,000 ¹	2,000	14,000,000	560
Minimum	450,000	18	300,000 ²	12

Source: Woodcarver Household Survey, July-September, 2005; using 2005 exchange rate, US\$=25,000

Notes:

1. The next highest income was MZM 10,000,000 (US\$400). Removing this 'outlier' reduces the mean to MZM 4,438,888 (US\$177).

2. Does not include sixteen rural carvers who reported no sales over the year. Including these carvers (n=37) reduces average income from carving to \$72.

Although instructive, some caution is necessary when interpreting these data. Firstly, there were a large number of non-respondents, which could arguably limit the validity of our findings. However, the relative possessions scores of non-respondents (see Section 2, above), do not appear to be systematically different from those of respondents, giving no *a priori* reason for assuming bias in our results. Secondly, while incomes are certainly higher in Pemba, so are costs of production (see Table 10 earlier), suggesting that the differential in *net* returns is less marked than the data in Table 20 imply. These levels of earnings compare poorly with estimated carver incomes in Mozambique in the late 1990s, in US\$ terms, (UNESCO, 1999) and are also relatively low internationally. Summarising the results of eight case studies of commercial woodcarving (four in Africa and two each in Mexico and Indonesia) undertaken between 2000 and 2005, Belcher and Achdiawan (2005) report median producer incomes of US\$550 per year. Focusing on the four African 'comparators' they include suggests that earnings

by carvers in my survey are substantially below those in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa, but are likely to be above those in Zimbabwe²²⁶.

Urbanisation in Cabo Delgado since the 1990s has been associated with the 'professionalisation' of carving. A number of returning migrants from Tanzania (several of whom were born and/or learned to carve there), drawn back to Mozambique by political stability, aimed to replicate in Pemba the commercial 'success' achieved by Makonde carvers in Dar es Salaam. This continuity of carving practice, however, was not accompanied by a similar continuity of market opportunities, nor by the forms of patronage prevalent in Dar es Salaam, at Mwenge Craft Village, in particular (see discussion in Chapter 3).

At the time of my household survey (in 2005), urban carver livelihoods remained relatively 'undiversified', both at the level of the individual and of the household. Most members of the three Pemba cooperatives worked as full-time, self-employed carvers; although they could not be considered to be 'micro-entrepreneurs', several of the younger carvers clearly aspired to be so²²⁷. In my survey three-quarters indicated that they relied solely upon carving for their living. Of the remainder, only one reported participating in paid employment ('casual, odd jobs'). The others indicated that they cultivated small amounts of land just outside Pemba, with two supplementing their income from selling surplus crops. Only two Pemba carvers (10% of the total) reported that any household members had alternative formal employment in the previous year, while one reported having one household member receiving a pension. All three of these 'diversified' households had possessions scores in the highest quartile.

All Makonde sculptors living in the rural areas are also farmers, helping to cultivate their family plot of land in the rainy season and using the dry season (or

²²⁶ Earnings by carvers in the Bushbuckridge area in South Africa in 2000 were estimated at US\$514 (see Shackleton, 2005) for carvings of much poorer quality than those of the Makonde, for example.

²²⁷ Group Discussion at Bela Baia, Pemba, 9th July 2005

winter) to sculpt (Kacimi & Sulger, 2004). This, of course, could be open to multiple interpretations. For most of the rural carvers in the survey, farming seems to represent the normal means of household reproduction in the presence of scarce regular employment opportunities²²⁸, reducing the need to earn cash to survive. In this sense, farming could be seen as a means of subsidising carving production. However, for land-poor households, agricultural production may not even meet subsistence needs²²⁹. Under these circumstances, carving could be seen as providing a potential source of cash income to supplement the returns from farming, offering itself as an important survival or coping strategy where landholdings are too small to support household reproduction. In this sense carving can be seen as an 'involutionary' (Harriss, 1991), or regressive, form of livelihood diversification, rather than as 'positive strategy of adaptation leading to accumulation by rural producers' (Start and Johnson, 2001). In the group discussions, many carvers linked the idea of carving with the idea of 'survival' in both economic and cultural terms²³⁰; behind the obvious rhetoric in these and other similar testimonies seems to lie genuine concerns, which the data to some extent supports.

Although woodcarving often generates very limited returns, it nevertheless offers some needed support to the household incomes of the rural poor; even with only intermittent sales sculptors have an incentive to carve because the raw material is almost free and for large parts of the year there is a low opportunity cost for

²²⁸ Most rural carvers reported that they had no alternative sources of income beyond farming their own land or woodcarving, but there were exceptions (for example, ET from Idovo who was a carpenter and DM from Miula who worked as a guard; three others indicated in the survey that they had employment beyond farming and carving, but declined to say what it was). In the household survey, no carvers reported receiving social transfers of any kind; later biographical interviews indicated however that several were in receipt of small government pensions.

²²⁹ There is evidence from my survey of wide inequality of landholdings amongst rural carver households. Three-quarters of households farm one or two machambas, but of the remainder an equal number are landless or farm three or four machambas. There is variation, too, in the size of machambas. Brück (2004) suggests that the relative land abundance of northern Mozambique and poor infrastructure has led to farmers improving their welfare by extending land farmed, rather than by greater intensification or cash crop production.

²³⁰ CE, Miula, Mueda District (14th July 2005), for instance, told me that ' (w)e sell carvings as a way to survive', in the sense that it supplemented the returns available from agriculture. GN, Mpeme, Mueda District (18th July 2005) linked income generation to the 'selling of our heritage', suggesting '(w)e only sell our traditional culture to get money to survive'.

their labour. As discussed earlier, there is a cultural significance to woodcarving that is recognised by many Makonde carvers²³¹ and which sits alongside any economic imperative and almost *requires* the continuation of the work even in the face of poor economic returns. Thus, as JN of Cooperative Chibiliti explained:

We are carving as a custom, like the peasants who work the land every year. We are not considering carving as a quick way of getting some money.

JN, Group Discussion, Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (16th July, 2005)

For most carver households the production and sale of woodcarvings is unlikely to reach a sufficient scale to provide a sustainable means of eradicating poverty. Nevertheless, my survey findings suggest that, on average, returns from carving could represent up to 20-25% of household incomes²³², but this hides wide variations in returns; as shown, whilst two-fifths of carvers had derived no revenue from the activity in the previous year, at the other extreme a much smaller number earned US\$200 dollars or more. There also appears to be a positive (if weak) association between earnings from carving and landholdings, suggesting that existing inequalities are likely to be exacerbated rather than reduced. This echoes the conclusions of Tschirley and Weber (1994), for non-farm income of all forms, in northern Mozambique. However, my empirical evidence seems to show that other forms of diversification in terms of formal sector employment of household members – as a guard or as an agricultural wage worker for example – have a stronger influence on household wealth and stratification (as measured by possessions scores) than returns from woodcarving alone. A final observation concerns the clear stratification of rural carving groups (village or Mueda-based associations or cooperatives), with a wide variation in relative wealth (or poverty), as demonstrated by average

²³¹ Pereira et al (2006) report on studies in South Africa that conclude that the 'maintenance of tradition' is an important non-economic benefit of natural resource-based craft trade. See Chapter 7 for a discussion of this aspect of woodcarving.

²³² This seems in line with other estimates. For instance, Belcher et al (2005), characterise woodcarving (as NTFP) as falling into two categories of household strategy (out of a total of five) they identify: 'Subsistence/Coping' for low-value carving and 'Integrated' for high-value carving; in both cases, the contribution to household income of the NTFP is between 5% and 40%, with an average of about 25%.

Possessions Scores of the various ‘groupings’ (see Table 21). In contrast, the difference in Possessions Scores between the urban cooperatives (in Pemba) is far less marked.

Table 21: Possessions Scores of Rural Carving Groups				
Mueda Town (2 groups) (n=6)	Idovo Village (Individuals) (n=7)	Miula Village (2 groups) (n=10)	Nandimba (1 group) (n=4)	Mpeme (2 groups) (n=8)
0.83	1.71	1.17	2.00	1.25

Source: Carver Survey, July-September 2005. For calculation of Possession Score see Table 19.

Notes:

1. The average Possessions Score for all rural carvers was 1.39.

Here, the various carving groups, and the social (sub)networks that they represent, are characterised by widely different levels of wealth and accumulation, at least as measured (admittedly fairly crudely) by household assets. This is likely to be in part a product both of their particular histories (or ‘legacies’) and the particular power relationships and social ties (or ‘linkages’) within each group (Meagher, 2010). I return to this discussion in Chapter 7 (Section 4) when looking at the importance of institutional ‘legacy’ and ‘locality’ in network formation, and their roles in framing carver livelihood ‘trajectories’.

Both economic and cultural factors and institutional practices have clearly helped to shape and preserve the Makonde carving networks – their cultural exclusivity and the relationship of different individuals (both members and aspiring members) within them. In this sense, they might be considered a source of resilience and opportunity in the face of recent rapid economic and social change and state neglect. However, the empirical evidence presented so far suggests otherwise. I have shown that within the woodcarving ‘chain’, of which they are a part, the carvers face emerging problems of raw material availability, intensifying pressures for commodification and standardisation of production, slowly growing and erratic carving sales at best and limited opportunities for diversification.

Further, the carving groups (or ‘communities’) that have evolved in recent years are far from socially or economically homogeneous.

While carver households do not appear on average to be systematically different (either ‘better-off’ or ‘worse-off’) compared to their provincial neighbours (when judged using a range of poverty indicators), there is a high degree of differentiation and stratification within the carving ‘community’ itself. Whilst my finding of relatively higher levels of poverty faced by rural carvers is probably predictable, the marked differentiation between carvers *within the same* carving groups (both urban and rural) might not be. In other words, while the Makonde woodcarvers appear to display a high degree of homogeneity in terms of ethnicity, geographical origin, skills acquisition and repertoire of carvings produced, they appear to be very different when judged in terms of living conditions and household possessions. This suggests that an attempt to use material (quantitative) indicators to define (or reify) a ‘representative’ carver or to establish a neat typology of carvers would be difficult, if not impossible to undertake. The alternative is to use a range of qualitative data to help contextualise general carver livelihood ‘trajectories’, to identify the structural factors (historical, cultural, social and economic) influencing individual carver ‘life paths’ and to analyse issues of power, governance and the potential for, and limits to, ‘upgrading’ (and poverty reduction) in the Makonde wood carving chain. I begin this process with a portrayal of two very different carver livelihood ‘trajectories’, based on biographical interviews conducted in May 2010 in order to illustrate the extent of differentiation and the influence of history, contingency and social relations on individual carver lives. In Chapter 7 I move on to a more detailed exploration of the dynamic and relational contexts in which these lives have been lived.

6.4 Postscript: two contrasting carver livelihood ‘trajectories’

AM and DC were both born in Lindi, Tanzania but almost twenty years apart, with DC the younger of the two. Their lives are now very different. AM lives in Mieze, 15km west of Pemba, and uses carving to help support his family (and supplementing subsistence production from two small machambas). He relies on occasional small commissions from Lesley at Arte Maconde Ida²³³ in the absence of other regular sales. He has worked as a individual carver since the effective demise of the 1st May Cooperative in Mieze in the early 1990s²³⁴. DC, in contrast, lives in Pemba, and is a member of the large and stable Mpingo Cooperative and has clearly been able to make a good living and acquire a range of household possessions. Their life stories illustrate the contingent nature of history and circumstance and the combined impact of these on livelihood opportunities.

AM was brought up by his mother (and lived in a female-headed rural household) from the age of ten. He experienced enforced migration back to Mozambique after the death of his father, just as the liberation war was erupting in Chai with the displacement and hardship this brought. After prison (aged 19) he fled to the relative security of Mieze where he learnt to carve. Here is a description of AM’s early life²³⁵:

AM was born in a small village in Lindi district, Tanzania in 1953. When he was ten years old, and following the death of his father, the family moved back to Mozambique, settling in Chai, in Macomia district. He explained that before the likumbi (initiation) he was called Magaga (which in Makonde means dry cassava), his grandfather’s name; after that he changed his name to A.

²³³ ‘He is not well and finds it difficult to cover the costs of his insulin and is always looking for work’ Lesley, Arte Makonde Ida, Pemba, 24th May 2010.

²³⁴ My Field Notes (26th April 2005) record the following. ‘The Cooperative in Mieze was formed in 1980 and originally had 20 members and; in the early 1990s, several members left to go to Nampula or Beira; Antonio mentioned ‘market problems and fighting between Frelimo and Renamo’ as the cause. Now there are only six remaining members. There is a sign on a concrete building adjacent to the main road (from Mueda to Montepuez) which Mieze straddles; it is deserted’ (and has been on each of my subsequent visits there).

²³⁵ Biographical interview, Mieze village, 24th May 2010.

In 1966 he was arrested by the Portuguese soldiers from Chai administrative post and spent three months in prison (he didn't say why). In order to 'escape a dangerous situation' he joined the 'Mozambican army' and his military commander sent him to Mieze. When he arrived there he found 'a good ambience for carving activities' because there were many Makonde people there working as soldiers and carving in their free time. After Independence (in 1975), he decided to settle permanently in Mieze.

He told me that during the colonial period 'our country was considered as a Portuguese province and everything in administration came from Portugal; many innocent people died, others were imported to work hard on European farms without wages; many people like me (were) imposed in bad conditions in different prisons inside and outside the country'. Now, freedom 'is the best thing in the country'. Also, he explained, foreign people now come to Mozambique to develop social projects in partnership, helping to build infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, schools, telecommunication system and so on.

AM is very conscious of the importance of education. He had four years of schooling, but did not complete primary school; his wife Rose did not attend school, but in 2005 his three teenage children were still in education.

In terms of changes in his own 'lifestyle', A talked about the need for formal education in order to apply for work in 'specific fields'. 'Even carving activities need formal education to do design and promotional marketing, to open local fairs or exhibitions. Without knowledge it is also difficult to borrow money, for example from government or NGOs'. Although there had been positive changes in terms of health and educational facilities and the availability of local shops, he believed that changes to life had been 'small-scale'; 'look at my house: it is still built only with traditional materials'. A was diagnosed with diabetes in 2008 and needs insulin to control his condition; this is costly. However, 'I am thankful for what I have, because people like Lesley (of Arte Makonde) have given me orders for carving, which will give me something to survive'.

DC's early life²³⁶ was much less traumatic. Although he too migrated from Tanzania to Mozambique as a child, this was part of a phased repatriation soon after the Independence war. He completed eight years of education, reaching junior secondary school level. In 2005, his four children of school age, all teenagers, were still in education; the fifth was then two years of age. In 2005, DC was Vice-President of the Cooperative Mpingo in Natite. This is the longest established (since 1979) and the most successful of the Pemba carving groups;

²³⁶ Biographical interview, Cooperative Mpingo, Pemba, 13th May 2010.

compared to the other cooperatives in the city (Bela Baia and Karibu Wimbe) it has been relatively stable.

D was born in Lindi, Tanzania in 1971. His parents had migrated from Cabo Delgado some years previously 'due to the coloniser's regime'. In 1976 'the local government came to Tanzania to mobilise Mozambican people to return (to) their home country in order to be involved in government programmes for the country's development'. As a result his parents brought the family back to Mozambique, settling in Pemba. 'I attended school until the age of 16, but did not continue my studies due to lack of finance'.

He started to learn carving (at the age of 16 or 17) 'as a way to have subsistence'; he was taught by his brother. He told us that his formal apprenticeship lasted two months (after this he was permitted to begin carving something on his own). Initially, he carved heads of animals like lions, impala, rhinoceros. As his skills increased and he became more experienced, the quality of his work improved; due to changes in 'market demand' he is now 'a specialist in different carvings including ujamaa, skeletons and figures 'describing Makonde history''. Now he is a Master and has 'something like ten learners' under him. In Maputo there are two of his former apprentices who are themselves Masters.

DC is divorced and in 2005 lived in a household with his five children and his father, who was working as a guard. Although D suggests that he (and his family) were able to 'live from carving revenues' alone, my 2005 survey suggested (at the time) that his father's earnings constituted about one half of household income. As a household head with diversified incomes sources (which includes wages from regular employment) he is relatively well off compared to other carvers.

I am satisfied with my carving activities, because I am living from carving revenues. D explained that he had 'sufficient financial condition to support my expenditure'. 'Nowadays, I have my (air-)conditioned house, one motorbike and a car'²³⁷, all of these the result of carving activities. It means my life is better than many years ago'. He felt his life had also improved because of 'the effort of the government to create basic infrastructures for the local community'. He explained that 'today, I have water, electricity power at home and we have public infrastructures like roads, schools, universities, hospital and so on. There are shops selling different products for the local community'. As he answered a call on his mobile phone, D told me that 'life had changed positively in terms of lifestyle quality; nowadays I have money to buy food to enrich the family diet'.

²³⁷ This is consistent with his very high 'assets/possessions score'; after we had met to set up the biographical interview for the following day he drove away from the Cooperative in a smart white pick-up (Field Notes, 12th May 2010).

Chapter 7: Carver Livelihoods: context, relations and prospects

7.1 Change and decline in the carving ‘community’

Livelihoods need to be viewed in dynamic and relational terms. That is, we need to see contemporary carver livelihoods as a product of both historical processes and structural factors (at the level of the household and carving ‘community’) and prevailing systems of social relations and political power. Choice of methodological approach is crucial here. The pattern and timing of my fieldwork – which involved several short visits stretching over a period of five years - was unavoidably influenced by the resource constraints and employment demands of pursuing doctoral research on a part-time basis (see Chapter 5). However, while lengthy, in-depth ethnographic participatory research was therefore not possible, I would argue that there were a number of advantages that emerged from my particular approach. The extended nature of the research permitted the monitoring of longitudinal changes in carver lives (or their livelihood ‘trajectories’) and developments in carving social networks. Furthermore, the gap between fieldwork episodes had the advantage of allowing me to adapt and refine my methodology and approach; for example, detailed analysis of the findings from the household survey and group discussions (undertaken in 2005), together with disaggregated national survey data obtained from INE (in 2008) helped inform and contextualise later biographical interviews or life stories (in 2010). Elements of these life stories or personal histories are used throughout this chapter to help to contextualise carver livelihood ‘trajectories’; the intention is not to identify a representative ‘life path’, but to attempt to understand how individual carvers interpret and reflect on their own lived experiences.

In the previous chapter I summarised some of the key quantitative findings from fieldwork undertaken between April and August 2005. By the time of my final fieldwork visit (in May 2010) circumstances had changed in many ways. Several carvers from Bela Baia Cooperative in Pemba had diversified their income

sources through taking on a 'multiplicity of roles'²³⁸, with access to these facilitated by their relatively high level of educational attainment; the most prominent amongst these was EM who, as well as carving and working as a part-time primary school teacher in Mecufi, was studying in the evening for a Tourism degree at UCM, Pemba. His wife worked as a nurse, leaving their two small children to the care of a female relative. Partly as a result and partly as a cause of this diversification by several key members, social tensions and power asymmetries had come to the fore, with the Bela Baia Cooperative allegedly riven with division and conflict, leading to uncertainty over its future. Similarly, Karibu Wimbe Cooperative, already under pressure in 2005 from falling carving sales due to fewer tourists visiting Wimbe Beach, had effectively collapsed following the death of Daniel Mwanga (its President) in 2007. By 2010, few of the cooperative's carvers were actively undertaking new work (due to their inability to purchase raw materials) and the cooperative's storeroom had been stripped bare by the distress sales of carvings which had also caused major friction between Daniel's two carver sons. Lacking 'assets', neither alternative informal sector activities nor casual wage labour was available to them. As Moser (1998) has emphasised, for the urban poor the 'resilience' needed to resist adversity and to recover from it is closely related to the assets that the poor hold or can access. The experience of Karibu Wimbe clearly illustrates the fragility and insecurity of urban carver livelihoods, and the close proximity of poverty to those lacking effective access to resilient social networks or other 'safety nets'. It also demonstrates, quite forcefully, that recent economic growth (and 'development') in Mozambique has inevitably produced many 'losers' to place alongside the relatively few who have gained substantially from liberalisation and privatisation.

In Mueda district, too, in May 2010 I encountered a very different economic and social terrain from five years earlier. A number of the carving groups that had participated in the original enumeration and survey (which covered the period

²³⁸ Three carvers were working as part-time primary school teachers. Another was employed by the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) as the salaried President of the craft association AKF helped establish.

April to August 2005) had effectively disappeared; these included the Association Livambwe in Mueda town, both Associations in Miula and the Association Shulumu in Mpeme. These had been the less coherent and more marginal groups in 2005. Meanwhile, in Idovo, the central carving area and storeroom used by carvers had gone and plans for resuscitating the former Association seemed to have been abandoned. The overall impression, reinforced in informal conversations with some individual carvers (and 'former' association members) at their houses, was that the number of active carvers in Mueda district had fallen dramatically over the five-year period between my first and last visits. As in the urban setting, for many households woodcarving had seemingly failed to provide a sustainable route out poverty.

7.2 History matters

According to Murray (2002), understanding individual or household livelihoods requires that the 'circumspective' (or observed contemporary livelihoods) be informed by an appreciation of the historical circumstances and events that came before it (the 'retrospective'), something which the essentialist and a-historical approach implicit in the 'livelihoods framework' fails to do. An analysis of contemporary carver livelihoods in Cabo Delgado must therefore be embedded in a broader discussion of the particular East African sculptural 'tradition' within which Makonde woodcarving developed (see Chapter 2). For the Makonde woodcarvers, this history confirms the crucial role of resistance, migration and patronage in the evolution of carving styles, methods of production and organisational forms.

The origins of Makonde woodcarving in Cabo Delgado have been documented earlier (in Chapter 2); here I intend to highlight key aspects interwoven with biographical description drawn from my field research. As Kingdon (2005a: 53) points out, the Mozambican Makonde from the Mueda plateau 'possessed one of the richest woodcarving traditions in Eastern Africa...making finely decorated

wooden medicine boxes that were traded along the local trade networks of the lower Rovuma River' from well before Portuguese occupation in the early 20th century. Some of these items would have been crafted from blackwood, but the material was not at the time widely used. In pre-colonial times, 'most Makonde men acquired basic wood shaping skills... (and although the work of a skilled carver could be admired)...none could be described as a specialist craftsman' (Kingdon, 2005a: 54). Carving was seen as a peripheral activity, subservient to the demands of farming and hunting. Indeed Kingdon (2005b: 3) believes that, for the Muedan Makonde, 'the emergence of a coherent 'artistic' identity, involving development of specialised sculptural abilities, was inhibited by a dominant 'provider ethic' that valued agricultural production and hunting above other activities'. Carving production was limited to the occasional production of items for commercial sale or barter, thereby sustaining or supplementing livelihoods.

The economic and social impact of Portuguese colonialism in northern Mozambique – including early forms of patronage from missionaries and colonial officials, as well as the demands of colonial labour and taxation policies – transformed both carving forms and genres, and the place of carving in individual livelihoods. Some carvers became part of the large numbers of Makonde migrating northwards across the Rovuma river to Tanzania; others produced commercial versions of 'traditional' functional items (like bottle stoppers) for sale to concession company officials. FM²³⁹ offered the following account of what happened 'when the white people came to Mueda plateau':

When the white people came to the plateau where the Makonde lived, they had an interest in the business of woodcarving...due to the white people, the woodcarving industry became commercialised with money. ...the white people had started demanding different models to be made in the woodcarving industry (a man as a hunter, a man or woman carrying firewood...a dog, elephant, giraffe). Since it was in the business of money or commercialised, white woodcarving buyers used to hire the artists from their villages to go to the white mans' home...to Mueda or Porto Amelia (Pemba) or Lourenco Marques (Maputo). There he did the work he wanted or did a specific work for them...spending on average 'about 3 or 6 months'. Then they returned home'.

²³⁹ Biographical interview, Cooperative Karibu Wimbe, Pemba, 17th May 2010.

In this way carving moved from 'marginal activity...to serve as a source of cash income... (and)...seems to have been aimed at minimising the disruptive and intrusive impact on Makonde society of forced participation in the colonial economy' (Kingdon, 2005b: 14). I would go further than this and suggest that, for many, carving sales supported the survival of households in precarious and worsening economic conditions imposed upon them by colonial policies.

For a few, therefore, carving offered the scope for livelihood diversification through formal, if uncertain and irregular, wage employment as artisans or craftsmen. During the 1940s some carvers in Cabo Delgado were able to obtain carving licences which partially exempted them from *chibalo* (forced labour) and a small number were employed full-time by colonial administrators (as 'craftmen servants') or by Catholic missions, where they were commissioned to produce religious artefacts (West and Sharpes, 2002). In the extract below, FM's account again, but this time describing his early life, how he came to be employed at Lipelua mission, the financial arrangements there and his duties:

FM was born in Idovo village, Mueda district in the mid-1930s, a time when the Portuguese colonialists were extending their influence in northern Mozambique and commercial Makonde blackwood carving was in its infancy²⁴⁰. He recounted how his father was a teacher who taught him how to read and write using a home made 'black table' and the sandy floor of the compound, and imparted basic Christian beliefs. His father sent him (and ten other schoolchildren from the village) to the Catholic mission at Imbuo, where he studied until he had completed Class 4. FM, like others in this position, was then expected to return to his village to teach the younger children, but he developed an interest in becoming a woodcarver. He learnt to carve with his older brother and, after mastering the necessary skills, both of them were given jobs at Lipelua mission. Each mission had a business buying and then selling woodcarvings. At Lipelua, he worked as a priest's employee carving elephant bones and also blackwood carvings. FM recalled that the priest's name was Padre Hamberg. As an employee at the Mission, he was exempt 'from any compulsory work forced by the Portuguese state. For example, exempt from an obligation to work at the sisal farm or other State work'. He only had to pay an annual community charge (ukodi in Makonde) to the Portuguese government and was paid a wage according to the hours and days of work, which 'was enough to live on'. The carvers and other employees also received gifts – sugar, soap, food and clothes – and if they wanted something more substantial, like a bicycle, they could pay the priests for this over time.

²⁴⁰ Barely ten years after Nyekenya's first commercial carving efforts.

Many more Mozambican Makonde carvers migrated to Tanzania in the 1950s to escape increasingly harsh economic policies. By moving to Dar es Salaam or other urban centres of carving in the north of Tanzania, some were able to take advantage of a growing international market for woodcarvings to become full-time 'independent sculptors' (Kingdon, 2005a). As described previously in the discussion of the Makonde 'woodcarving chain' in Tanzania (Chapter 2), this growth in demand for carvings was underpinned by a dramatic rise in tourism and facilitated by a number of traders able (and very willing) to act as intermediaries and patrons. FM describes here his time as a migrant in Tanzania and his trading activities which took him intermittently to Kenya:

FM worked at Lipelua mission until 1958, at which point he was in his mid-twenties; he was married by then but had no children. He and his wife, and his brother, then became part of the large numbers of Makonde who migrated to Tanzania to escape increasingly oppressive colonial labour policies and to take advantage of greater employment opportunities. He lived and worked as a carver in the small town of Ndanda, in southern Tanzania for eight years, before moving to Dar es Salaam with his wife. There he continued with his carving, but also worked as a 'secretary' for Frelimo. Later, he spent three years in Kenya, also as a 'woodcarver artist', before returning to Dar es Salaam where he became more active as a fundraiser and membership secretary for Frelimo in Kilondoni district, alongside his carving work. The money he raised was sent to support the Frelimo training camp at Nachinguea. FM remained in Tanzania after Mozambican Independence in 1975, supplementing his income from carving by buying items from other woodcarvers and selling them in Kenya²⁴¹. In 1995, following the ceasefire, FM and his younger brother (D) returned to Idovo, moving to Pemba two years later. They managed to set up a workshop and woodcarver cooperative, first with the aid of a benefactor and later with Government support.

At this point, it is useful to highlight the particular livelihood trajectories of the Tanzanian Makonde carvers located in 'suburban' areas outside Dar es Salaam; the contrast with those in rural southeastern Tanzania and Cabo Delgado is instructive. Saetersdal (1998: 288-289)²⁴² describes the suburban carving groups

²⁴¹ He recalled that while in Kenya (he didn't specify where) he and three friends met a 'white family' 'who allowed us to stay and do our work' in their backyard and helped to sell the carvings to other 'white people', without commission.

²⁴² Saetersdal's paper is based on fieldwork conducted over a five-month period in 1993 with Mozambican Makonde carvers in Boko village, north of Dar es Salaam and among Mozambican and Newalan Makondes in Mtwara region in south east Tanzania. The starkly different scale, perceptions of carving as an economic activity and variation in genres and styles between urban

in Boko as comprising a 'small-scale industry, but organised according to family groups, with 'the economic niche of carving...the result of entrepreneurship of... the individual carvers'. Later, he indicates that despite a degree of cooperation in the working environment, the sharing of income between carvers is not 'rigorously enforced', with many selling carvings privately and keeping all the money themselves. In addition, on very large orders, the carvers may hire unskilled labour paid at an hourly rate (as well as using women to polish and clean finished products). Kingdon (2005a) similarly talks of the migration of carvers away from their Muedan 'homeland' to Tanzania as prompting the unleashing of an entrepreneurial 'spirit'. In this way they conform to Zeleza's (2005) conceptualisation of an 'intra-African diaspora' coalescing into a self-defined (economic) community within the host country.

DM from Cooperative Karibu Wimbe recounted that he left Idovo village at the age of 16, first travelling to Ndanda Mission, near Mtwara, where he worked carving religious artefacts and small animals for the missionaries there²⁴³. He later settled in Dar es Salaam, where he lived before returning to Cabo Delgado with his family, to work as a carver in Pemba. Many of the older respondents whose voices appear here had similar stories of migration to Tanzania in the 1960s and early 1970s with most also working as carvers in Dar es Salaam. Most 'rural' carvers indicated that they returned to Mozambique soon after Independence.

VN²⁴⁴ escaped to Tanzania (in 1970) when he was 19, displaced by the 'coloniser war'. He said that in Tanzania:

'I found interested people to teach me carvings as a way of surviving'. He learnt for one year in the 'rural region where I lived' before moving to Mwenge cooperative in Dar es Salaam, in order to 'find carving market'.

and village-based carvers in Tanzania is far greater than I observed in Cabo Delgado (Saetersdal, 1998: 303).

²⁴³ Field Notes, 23rd April 2005.

²⁴⁴ Biographical interview, Miula village, Mueda District, 20th May 2010.

Nostalgia for a 'mythic' homeland together with 'the experience of displacement in the host culture can be a powerful nexus for personal and collective identity' (Peffer, 2005: 5) and the pursuit of economic self-interest; at the same time, paradoxically, the Mozambican Makonde diaspora had a far-reaching influence on their Tanzanian 'host' culture, through the development of new carving styles (in particular, the *ujamaa* statues) which were lauded at the time (in the early to mid 1960s) by the political authorities in Tanzania.

A different and more direct form of political 'patronage' was manifested (as described in Chapter 2) in FRELIMO's support for the work of carvers in Cabo Delgado during the Liberation struggle of the 1960s and 1970s. There the movement organised production cooperatives and supported the marketing of carvings through international solidarity networks (West and Sharpes, 2002) as well as through direct sales in Tanzania; in return, they shared in the revenues from carving sales²⁴⁵.

MN²⁴⁶ describes how, in 1967, when he was in his early-20s:

I was called by Lazaro Nkavandame²⁴⁷ to be 'responsible for all carvers in Cabo Delgado province; my work was to organise this group in order to find the carving market'. Some carvers were already serving as FRELIMO soldiers, some worked as 'peasant sculptors'. Matias explained that (as he was a Swahili speaker) he sometimes went to Tanzania to sell carvings to help the FRELIMO campaign. To avoid the Portuguese army, carvers as well as their helpers carried their bundles of sculptures through the nights from the most remote places to Mtwara, the agreed selling point in Tanzania'.

²⁴⁵ Several of the older carvers confirmed this arrangement, knowledge of which seemed to come as a surprise to my research assistant Richard (Field Notes, 15th July 2005). HM, for instance, said that 'we were organised in cooperatives according to the Frelimo guides, and we were selling them in Mtwara. So we help FRELIMO to continue with the war by give (sic) part of our money for other things during the war' (AAM, Livambwe, Mueda, 17th July 2005). DS (Cooperative Karibu Wimbe, 13th August 2005), bemoaning that 'nowadays we do not have a market' added that '(i)n time, FRELIMO found the market for us to sell the carvings in for example Tanzania, during the war against colonialism'.

²⁴⁶ Biographical interview, Nandimba, Mueda District, 20th May 2010. MN talks in a quietly assured way; he has 'a natural authority'. He has been frequently interviewed (see for instance, West and Sharpes, 2002 and Kacimi and Sulger, 2004); as the latter observe, '(t)he way he tells his story shows that he is aware of the value of its historic and artistic testimony' (op.cit: 110) and, I might add, its political resonance.

²⁴⁷ At the time Provincial Secretary for Frelimo in Cabo Delgado.

Although there is some disagreement over the exact provenance of the *ujamaa* genre of carvings,²⁴⁸ there is no doubt that FRELIMO's patronage led to an emphasis on this style – which embodied values of communalism and unity – and others with a subject matter that more directly expressed resistance to Portuguese colonialism (see discussion in Chapter 2). These wartime 'production cooperatives' have also influenced the organisational forms adopted by contemporary carving groups in Cabo Delgado, which retain at least a commitment to collective raw material supply and partial sharing of income as well 'democratic' governance. The difference, of course, stressed by many carvers, is that they no longer have the access to FRELIMO's patronage, nor to the 'customers' that it once effectively guaranteed.

7.3 Culture matters

7.3.1 Valuing culture

'Culture' is a highly amorphous and contested concept, but generally encompasses two distinct strands in relation to 'livelihoods' (see Chapter 2). Firstly, that it defines shared beliefs and practices, which may underpin how particular groups view their lives, interact and behave (this links with ideas of 'networks', defined in 'social' or 'cultural' terms, see discussion in Section 4, below). And, secondly, that cultural 'traditions' or 'activities' may be embodied in unique cultural goods or products (which would include carvings and other arts and crafts). As well as supporting individual livelihoods, these products may themselves be a symbol of, and help sustain, a broader cultural consciousness. However, valuing a cultural product is likely to be particularly complex (Klamer, 2003), because this is inevitably highly context and content specific (in terms of social relations, place, extent of individual creativity, broader symbolic

²⁴⁸ Saetersdal (1998: 296) is very clear in his attribution that '(t)he origin of the style (*ujamaa*) may be traced back to one source, a carver from Boko called Mzee Robert Yakobo'. Kacimi and Sulger (2004: 43-44) partly support this view, but state that the *ujamaa* 'arose in the 1960s in Dar es Salaam from two Makonde sculptors from Mozambique, Pajume Alale Tupa and Robeto Yakobo Sangwani' (our emphasis). The latter initially called his work *dimongo* from chiMakonde (meaning the strength, vigour and energy of people working together).

significance etc). I explore some of the complications that surround the valuing and pricing of Makonde carvings in Section 3.2, below.

Kacimi and Sulger (2004: 14) believe that the Makonde sculptors 'have a language, a history and traditions in common that clearly distinguish them from the numerous other ethnic groups living in Mozambique, a country rich in cultural diversity'. This common 'identity', reinforced by a high degree of ethnic exclusivity, (see Chapter 2) – within which culture is both a way of life and a source of meaning – has typically been seen (certainly by most of the Makonde carvers encountered in this research) as a force for social cohesion. The cultural homogeneity of the Makonde woodcarving groups has historically been reinforced by the system of apprenticeship used, which has supported the inter-generational transmission of carving skills within kinship groups (see Section 4, below). Some writers (Kingdon, 2002; 2005b; in particular) have also placed emphasis on the spiritual or emotional connection the Makonde carvers appear to have with their work, particularly when it involves working in African blackwood or *mpingo*. As CM explained:

'Makonde express their feelings by woodcarving; they have a capability to express internal emotions, conflicts, regional culture, and other feelings'

CM, Group Discussion, Cooperative Bela Baia, Pemba (9th July 2005)

The carvers believe that one of the 'community cultural assets'²⁴⁹ possessed by the Makonde is a unique ability and skill in woodcarving ('*other communities did not know the secret of carving*'²⁵⁰), which was passed down to them by their forefathers. This was reflected in the group discussions, where many of the carvers rationalised their commitment to sculpting by referring to woodcarving as being part of their 'heritage' or 'communal culture', which they wanted to preserve

²⁴⁹ I use the term here in the sense that it is used by Throsby (2001) to describe 'long-lasting stores of values and providers of benefits for groups and individuals'. Bourdieu (1986) uses the concept of 'cultural capital' in a similar way, when he uses it to refer to general cultural background (including knowledge and skills) passed from one generation to the next and which includes symbols and artefacts.

²⁵⁰ CT, Miula village, Mueda District, 14th July 2005.

and pass on to the 'younger generation' in their families. They talked of woodcarving as a 'legacy of the ancients/ancestors' and an activity to which they 'were born'. However, most (like BM, below) were also very conscious of the economic imperative (often expressed in terms of 'selling our heritage') that lay behind it:

'Makonde are woodcarvers due to the heritage. We are carving as a legacy of our ancestral. Our ancients marketed the woodcarvings to the colonial Portuguese in Macimboa de Praia. The main interest was money. They didn't do that activity without (the) market (for) it'.

BM, Group Discussion, Idovo Village, Mueda District (12th July 2005)

The 'modern' African blackwood carving 'movement'²⁵¹ has, over the last century, supplemented the incomes of many Makonde households, often allowing them to escape the worst impact of forced labour policies in northern Mozambique or helping to support a life in exile. However, these livelihood 'opportunities' have emerged within the context of colonial (and post-colonial) capitalism, where class (as well as kinship) has increasingly become a factor mediating access to skills, resources and markets. Those able to become carvers may not have been (or be) from the poorest households while, as has been emphasised, in contemporary Mozambique the carving community is becoming increasingly stratified and differentiated between a few 'accumulators' and many 'survivors'.

In the longer-term, the preservation of carving traditions relies upon the maintenance of 'carving skills with their deep cultural roots – and favoured wood resources' (Campbell et al, 2005: 253). However, it also requires (as the wider examples presented in Chapter 2 have demonstrated) the technical skills *and* the willingness to *adapt* to changing market demands and of creatively expressing new ideas and forms (or embracing 'hybridisation'), as the contemporary Makonde woodcarvers have demonstrated. The recent history of Makonde

²⁵¹ This 'movement' is effectively a 'hybrid', born from the intersection between traditional Makonde ritual and functional crafts and Western demand for 'primitive' art (see Chapter 2, which locates this within the broader African art and craft tradition).

carving shows that creativity and innovation has often followed from an occasional 'cathartic moment' (de Vletter, 2008) – often market-driven or patron-led - which has given rise to a new style or design.

The best contemporary Makonde blackwood sculpture is widely considered to exhibit the key features of a cultural good or product (Kasfir, 1999; Kacimi and Sulger, 2004). It embodies *creativity* or originality in style and composition; it is able to generate and convey *symbolic meaning*, or the ability to inspire, and; it demonstrates expressive *authenticity*, reflecting community traditions and systems of meaning, but also reflecting contemporary influences. Determining the 'worth' of a cultural product (see the discussion above and in Chapter 2) is however far from straightforward, partly because of the difficulty of valuing individual creativity and aesthetic quality. The difficulty also relates to the problem of determining the nature of the value a *community* places on the traditions symbolised by an art or craftwork (possibly based on ritual or religion) which is likely to mean it attracts a high 'social use value'. Entry to the marketplace, however, leads inevitably to a 'disavowal of use value' (Steiner, 1994: 160). Whether market exchange undermines aesthetic quality or whether it reinforces it is open to debate.

While a small number of Makonde 'Masters' may have benefited from greater international exposure and wider appreciation of the provenance and content of their work, the vast majority of carvers remain effectively anonymous. The demands of the marketplace and the pressing 'need to sell (our) traditional culture to get the money to survive'²⁵², has inevitably led to the increasing commodification of Makonde sculpture and resulting low returns, despite the best efforts of producers. A common feeling amongst the carvers was that it was now 'clients who guided what the carvers produced' and that this had led inevitably to a greater concentration on a smaller number of styles. Carvers are now 'ordered

²⁵² GN, Mpeme village, Mueda District, 18th July 2005.

to carve the style which the customers want' or find themselves 'carving according to market demand...styles which have a good image in the market'²⁵³.

7.3.2 The pricing of culture and the culture of pricing

For cultural products (and cultural 'producers') the use of price as an indicator of value (and 'use' value as a basis of understanding pricing) is highly problematic. This is partly because the identification of value and the determination of price are inseparable from the process through which this occurs. As discussed earlier (and more broadly in Chapter 2), the derivation of the price of cultural goods – like woodcarvings – often occurs in a dynamic and active way as the product of a 'performative', negotiated or transactional process (Throsby, 2001). This process should in principle permit producers (artists and craftspeople) to build in knowledge of symbolic quality, like history, reputation or cultural 'tradition', thus countering the tendency towards 'commodity fetishism' that afflicts African carvings as they enter international exchange. However, this often proves difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. This is partly because within the woodcarving 'chain' or 'system of provision', power is unevenly distributed and wielded and is often in the hands of traders or other intermediaries who control distribution of value and access to information about conditions of production and reproduction (Section 4, below, offers an elaboration of this). These intermediaries help determine firstly, how far and under what conditions commodification takes place and the way in which value is assigned to art/craft 'objects' at different stages in the 'network of trade' and, secondly, they play a key role as 'mediators of commodified knowledge' between producers and consumers, including tourists, Western-based buyers and collectors (Steiner, 1994: 13-14).

²⁵³ Observations, respectively, from CE (Muila village, Mueda District), AM (Mieze, Pemba District) and FM (Karibu Wimbe, Pemba), Group Discussions 14th July, 28th and 13th August 2005, respectively. And yet, as Jules-Rosette (1986: 55) points out, the carvers can never be 'fully aware of the extent and composition of the consumer audience'.

*'A chair has a price, a carving does not!'*²⁵⁴

Of the ten rural cooperatives or associations surveyed in and around Mueda town, only Association 3rd February in Nandimba village had (in 2010) a showroom for carvings. The showroom, part of a three-room building (in May 2010 much closer to completion than it had been in 2005) which includes an office and secure storage area, as well as an outside meeting space, overlooks the road that passes through the middle of the village linking Mueda to the new bridge across the Rovuma river at Negomano, Cabo Delgado²⁵⁵. None of the rural cooperatives or associations surveyed displays the prices of carvings. In contrast, all three of the Pemba carving cooperatives have showrooms adjacent to the carvers' place of work; those at Mpingo and Bela Baia were well stocked. All carvings on display are labelled with a price tag, which also includes the carver's name. However, the prices displayed on carvings sold by the Pemba cooperatives are in effect 'maximum' prices and are of course negotiable; personal experience suggests that the agreed price may be two-thirds of this or less²⁵⁶.

As described in Chapter 6, the average price of like-for-like carvings is systematically higher in Pemba than in Mueda which as well as underlying supply and demand, reflected differences in production and selling costs (for raw materials and marketing etc), as well as variations in living expenses. There also appears to be a difference in pricing *practice* between urban and rural carvers; why should this be? The following conversation with MN is perhaps instructive here:

²⁵⁴ This is a comment made by MN (Biographical Interview, 20th May 2010) in response to my questions on how carvings are priced. This might suggest that the carvers behave as 'revenue-maximisers', rather than 'profit maximisers', although they are certainly conscious that the value of a carving should be related to the time involved in its facture.

²⁵⁵ The Negomano bridge, about 100km north of Mueda (and the nearest tarmac road), was formally opened on the 25th May 2010, after almost five years of construction. It marks the site of first entry into Mozambique by Frelimo forces in the Independence War (in September 1964) – and part of the route used for transporting carvings out of Cabo Delgado (All.Africa.com, 2010).

²⁵⁶ Field Notes (April and July, 2005). Support for this also comes from the pricing policies of the UACAD Ujamaa craft shop (see Section 5, below), which all three Pemba cooperatives supply, where a standard 60% mark-up is used on sculptures (and in addition to which, like the cooperative, UACAD retains 10%).

Following the biographical interview with him in his compound, I ask him to price a carving in my possession (see Table 22, below), but he finds it impossible to do so. He says that a carving does not have single price because 'it depends on the client'. The limited number of 'clients' visiting Nandimba means that each sale can be individually negotiated with the prospective buyer and a price determined by a process of haggling or negotiation, without any pre-determined 'reference point'. For MN both the skills of the carver and the time it takes to produce the item are important in determining the 'value' (his term) of a carving. Is there a minimum acceptable price in the head of carver? 'No'. Why, then, are there prices on each carving sold by the Pemba cooperatives? 'It is different there. There are many tourists (clients) and therefore prices must be displayed'²⁵⁷.

A further comparison may be drawn by looking at the approach to pricing used by the Mwenge craft village shops in Dar es Salaam, the centre of the Tanzanian Makonde woodcarving 'chain', none of which displays price tags on carvings or other goods. Molony's view (2005) is that this is done in order to draw the customer into conversation with the salesperson who indicates the price with little suggestion that this is open to discussion, before telling the potential buyer more about the background to a carving. The transaction then generally proceeds through 'performative bargaining' or negotiation (Steiner, 1994), but with the retailer having the advantage of knowing both the 'worth' of the carving in the African art trade and its relative value in the buyer's home market²⁵⁸ (and so in this sense approaching a conventional retail transaction). In other words, the Mwenge retailer is 'able to straddle both African and Northern worlds by knowing a product's real (economic) value in the African market and also by being attuned to the tastes and desires of the Northern market and how much foreigners are willing to pay for a product' (Molony, 2005: 207). An alternative explanation (offered to me by Karama Mombasa, owner of shop number 59) was based around minimisation of the degree of competition between outlets. In his view, if a

²⁵⁷ Biographical interview, Nandimba, Mueda District, (21st May, 2010).

²⁵⁸ This market knowledge arises from direct links with 'captive' Makonde sculptors who supply the Mwenge craft shops (Chapter 6) and well-established international connections, increasingly facilitated and deepened through the growing use of ICT. At the time of my visit to Mwenge (in April 2005), only one shop accepted payment by credit card, but many others were planning to follow. Work is commissioned from carvers based on 50% in advance (for wood and materials) and 50% on completion; the carvers reportedly received only one-third of the final price of the carving (Field Visit, 10th April, 2005).

price was displayed it could be immediately undercut by neighbouring shops, all of which offered a remarkably similar range of carvings. Commercial success instead required an emphasis on uniqueness and innovation in style, rather than potentially damaging price competition.

Valuing the priceless: a practical pricing experiment

Instead of undertaking a price comparison based on (inevitably non-standard) individual items or categories of carvings, an alternative procedure was adopted which effectively reversed the process. In other words, I approached the problem of pricing/valuation by taking a single carving (a 20cm hollow ujamaa, made from African blackwood) purchased in Maputo in 2008 and of known provenance (see Table 22), and then asking individual carvers in various carving 'sites' in Cabo Delgado to assess both the quality of the carving and the price they would ask for it. This also helped to at least partially overcome the potentially differential outcome(s) resulting from the 'performative bargaining' between (an apparently) wealthy foreign buyer and poor domestic vendor. What did the exercise reveal? Firstly, all carvers agreed that the sculpture was of good quality and demonstrated some skill in execution, but found it difficult to value without knowing how long it took to carve. This suggests (as I intimated as part of the discussion of cultural value in Chapter 2) that the carvers have an implicit 'labour theory of value' embedded in their artistic practice, where the quantity of embodied labour time is directly related to the price/value sought in transaction. Secondly, that around a median valuation of MZM 1,500 (\$US50), there was an extremely wide variation in the estimates offered by carvers; the 'rural' carvers (from Mueda) all suggested a much lower price than those in Pemba. Thirdly, that most carvers appear to have over-estimated the return that such a carving might earn them, based both on its actual purchase price in Maputo and what Arte Maconde Ida would itself be prepared to offer to carvers (although the median carver estimate matches the retail price set by the latter). This could suggest naivety or ignorance, or might simply represent the carvers' own 'performative bargaining' (possibly in an attempt to induce Western buyers, like

the researcher, to pay more for their products)²⁵⁹ or attempt at basic price discrimination. Finally, Arte Makonde Ida, as a regular buyer of Makonde carvings in Cabo Delgado, appears either to have an accurate knowledge of the ‘market’ price or itself engages in ‘price-setting’ behaviour in the province (illustrative, perhaps, of a ‘trader-driven’ chain – see Section 5, below).

Table 22: What price a carving?	
Place	Price
Purchased at the Craft market at Praça 25 do Junho, Maputo	MZM 1,200
Cooperative Karibu Wimbe, Pemba (valuations from five carvers)	(1@)MZM 1,600 (1@)MZM 2,000 (3@)MZM 4,000
Cooperative Mpingo, Pemba (valuations from five carvers)	(4@)MZM 1,500 (1@)MZM 500
Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (valuations from four carvers)	(4@)MZM 1,000
Arte Maconde Ida, Pemba	Would buy for MZM 750 (if from Mueda carver) and sell for MZM 1,500

Source: Author's data

Notes:

1. Purchased in April 2008. The initial asking price was MZM 2,300 (US\$70). See contextual discussion in Chapter 5, Section 4.3. Carver valuations are all from my Field Visit in May 2010.

2. The carver's name (Nkavandame) is carved on the base; his ‘birth village’ was thought to be Matambalale, near Muidumbe, 20kms south east of Mueda. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to locate him there, however.

7.4. Individual Agency and Social Networks

Although they appear to operate as ‘self-employed’ artisans, it is clear from the analysis presented here and in the last chapter that it is difficult to neatly categorise the woodcarvers as a specific ‘class of labour’, either in the urban informal economy or the rural non-farm economy²⁶⁰. The ambiguity of the

²⁵⁹ I am grateful to Carlos Oya for this observation.

²⁶⁰ They are part of the growing number of households in Africa combining farming with a range of ‘precarious informal sector (survival) activities’ or wage labour, pursuing ‘their means of livelihood/reproduction across different sites of the social division of labour...footloose labour indeed’ (Bernstein, 2006: 403).

carvers' economic 'status' is inextricably linked to the way that Makonde woodcarving evolved as an occupation (with a deep 'cultural' connection), as well as to contemporary forms of organisation (the Cooperatives and Associations) that have emerged and within which carving is usually now conducted. As I have tried to emphasise, the carver 'labour market' can only be understood as the historically contingent outcome of the commodification of woodcarving and the resulting 'vertical' logic of the contemporary woodcarving 'chain' (or system of provision) which determine both capital/labour relations and the value of labour power itself (Fine, 2002).

In order to take the discussion further, I intend to focus more closely in this section on some of the specificities of the Makonde woodcarving 'trade', particularly those related to the scope for individual agency, the transmission of skills (and other barriers to entry) and the social networks in which carving is embedded.

7.4.1 The Limitations of Individual (Creative) Agency

In contrast to the emphasis in many previous studies of African art and craft on the object or product of carving – the sculpture – Kingdon (2002), in his participative study of Makonde carvers in Dar es Salaam, redirected attention to the 'artist' or maker himself (see Chapter 2). In Kingdon's view (2005b) the Makonde sculptors (in Dar es Salaam) in the 1950s and 1960s were able to use their creativity to take advantage of the particular conditions existing in Tanzania at the time²⁶¹, and their collective identity (and coherence) as 'diaspora', 'to advance their economic and social interests' through carving. Given the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be seen that his analysis greatly overstates the scope for individual agency available to the majority of contemporary carvers in Cabo Delgado, who struggle on a daily basis to make a

²⁶¹ These conditions included rapidly growing demand for carvings, the availability of 'active' patronage and the move towards political independence in Tanzania (Saetersdal, 1998; West and Sharpes, 2002).

living from their work. However, it does draw attention to a number of potential points of ‘tension’ or ‘opposition’ in carver lives (between patron/artist; between master/apprentice; between carver/trader, and; between individual and collective agency). I have previously emphasised the crucial role of patronage in the historical development of ‘commercial’ woodcarving in Cabo Delgado, including the part played in turn by colonial administrators, Catholic missionaries and FRELIMO. The relative absence of contemporary ‘patrons’ – be it wealthy locals or expatriates, traders or handicraft outlets, local businesses, the tourist ‘sector’ or the ‘state’ itself – was a frequent cause of complaint from carvers, regardless of location. While a small number of carvers have been relatively successful at tapping into these sources of patronage, the vast majority have not.

With limited international exposure few, if any, sculptors now based in Cabo Delgado have become internationally known as ‘artists’ in spite of a number of exhibitions of Makonde sculpture in Maputo, as well as Europe and North America over the last thirty years (see discussion of issues of ‘art and authenticity’ in Chapter 2). The exception, amongst the carvers in this study, is Matias Ntundo, who told us that ‘due to carving activities, I participated a lot in Fairs in Sweden, France and India, and at different times in Maputo’²⁶². Significantly, as outlined, the major stylistic developments of the last 50 years or so – like the *ujamaa* or *shetani* genres – occurred not in Mozambique, but in Dar es Salaam (see Chapter 2).

The carvers are clearly conscious of the need to subordinate their individual creative agency to market imperatives and to their own survival or household reproduction requirements. This self-awareness of the need to ‘carve for the market’, and the resulting tension it creates between artistry and artisanship (and survival), appeared as a regular theme during the group discussions, invariably

²⁶² Although he became known, artistically, primarily for his woodprints, a technique he learnt following workshops run by Maja Zurcher, a Swiss engraver, with carvers in Nandimba. Biographical Interview, Nandimba, Mueda District, 21st May 2010; see also Kacimi and Sulger (2004: 111-115).

initiated and pursued at length by the respondents themselves. However, whereas the particular form of patronage that existed in Dar es Salaam in the 1950s and 1960s (see Chapter 2), with the dialogue and interaction it involved, allowed individual ‘creative agency’ amongst the Makonde sculptors to flourish, the relative lack of local outlets and intermediaries means this is largely absent in present-day Cabo Delgado. This has tended to reinforce the commodification process through a crisis of reproduction.

7.4.2 Carver networks: Apprenticeship and Stratification

This section explores in more detail the basis on which carver networks (and their internal ‘linkages’) are constructed and maintained. While there are some restrictions on established carvers (‘outsiders’) joining Associations or Cooperatives (an aspect I deal with below), the main barriers to entry into carving have traditionally related to skills acquisition and the cost of training, which have depended primarily on kinship or social ties. This has led to a high degree of ethnic homogeneity within the Makonde carving ‘community’ in Cabo Delgado. This sort of ‘homogeneity’ is not unique and can still be commonly observed in many African arts and crafts ‘communities’ (see Kasfir, 1999). However, the informal social networks that have emerged in these differing settings should be viewed as historically and institutionally specific. These networks do not (as ‘social capitalistic’ perspectives suggest) inevitably constitute a source of economic strength and success, nor of economic stagnation (see Chapter 3). While many have similar institutional ‘legacies’ based on artisanal ‘tradition’, these networks (and the social ties that ‘bind’ them) have been shaped and restructured by economic, social and political changes which are context and place-specific (Meagher, 2005; 2010).

As has been seen, all but one of the carvers enumerated during the initial census were Makonde (the exception, from Bela Baia Cooperative, Pemba, AS, is

Makua)²⁶³, the vast majority were born in Mueda district and all were male. The carvers interviewed explained that this exclusivity existed because of the need for individuals not only to be skilled, but also to have a deep cultural connection to their work firmly based on traditional Makonde symbolism and motifs (Kingdon, 2002; Kacimi and Sulger, 2004). In other words, the purpose of the apprenticeship is to pass on both skills *and* cultural values through the medium of working with *mpingo* or blackwood. This was seen by many of the Master carvers as an important responsibility, as TM articulated with great clarity:

We want to preserve the Makonde Art and this cooperative is the signal that we are interested in it. We are recruiting young boys to join us here to learn carving because we are the unique Masters in this village that know this art very well and we have the duty to transmit this knowledge.

TM, Group Discussion, Nandimba, Mueda district (16th July, 2005)

Although there is clear stratification within several of the larger Associations or Cooperatives based on levels of skills (where members might be designated as Master, Middle-Master, Advanced-Apprentice, Beginner, for instance), alongside elected administrative roles (President, Secretary etc), there is less clarity on the particular requirements for moving between the strata. Given their central position as ‘gatekeepers’ controlling entry into the carving ‘profession’, ‘Master’ carvers seem to occupy a particularly privileged position. Although the vast majority of respondents identified themselves as ‘Masters’, very few were able to clearly articulate what determined this²⁶⁴. The most common responses focused on skills, creativity and knowledge of different carving styles (while often being a specialist in one), as well as personal characteristics. For instance, KN suggested that:

²⁶³ However there are almost certainly other individual part-time Makua carvers in Pemba. According to AS, ‘Makua culture does not accept to lose more time in the same activity from early morning to late afternoon, because they want daily revenue and carving get (sic) a lot of time to sell the products’ (Group Discussion, Bela Baia, Pemba, 9th July 2005).

²⁶⁴ In my survey I attempted to ascertain ‘When does a carver become a Master?’ This topic also surfaced during several Group Discussions (July/August, 2005).

*A Master is one who produces carvings surprising people and also other Masters.
A Master is one who is not ego, but the one who freely helps others.*

KN, Group Discussion, Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (16th July, 2005)

Finally, and perhaps more perceptively, Rabuci Kulukambee, from Mpeme, offered the following guidance on how a sculptor becomes a Master: 'Well, a Master is a sculptor who is complete in all types of sculptures. There is no certification. Slowly people start to recognize the talent of a sculptor and refer to him as a Master. It can be colleagues, customers or even neighbours' (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004: 99). Here, there is the suggestion that it is both the breadth of the expertise ('complete in all types of sculptures') and the quality of work produced, which is obvious to buyers as well as other carvers, that is important.

The Makonde tradition has been that each 'master' carver at any point has one or more 'apprentices' who he trains in the art of carving, moving over time from simple to more complex wood sculptures, a process which can span years²⁶⁵. Rabuci Kulukambee (again) states that Masters also have an important role in telling students 'legends and Makonde stories, in order to enrich their imagination' (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004: 99). However, there appears to have been some reduction in the duration of apprenticeship training in recent years, which seems to be part of more general trend in African arts and crafts industries, and in the informal sector more broadly²⁶⁶. This is perhaps another indicator of the pressures for standardization and commodification that are increasingly pervading carving. Almost two-thirds of respondents reported that their apprenticeships lasted for just two years or less. However, there was little difference between rural and urban carvers in this respect and (surprisingly) little correlation between age and length of apprenticeship. The vast majority learnt to

²⁶⁵ Master carver LK (Mueda district), now in his seventies has had eleven apprentices. Formerly, apprenticeships could last ten years; now 3-4 years or less is more common (Kacimi & Sulger, 2004).

²⁶⁶ Meagher (2010: 65) reports 'an erosion in both the quality and duration of apprenticeship training' in her study of informal sector shoe and garment producers in Nigeria. This is partly due to cheaper and lower quality products, requiring less technical knowledge, but it is also due to pressure from apprentices' families to reduce training periods so that income earning can begin sooner.

carve in Mueda district, but a significant proportion (almost one-quarter) began carving in Tanzania. There is evidence that those carvers who learnt to carve in Tanzania were both older when they started and served a significantly longer apprenticeship (see Table 23), in keeping with their status as migrants developing a skill which would enable them to make a living in a new environment. Just over two-thirds of the carvers indicated that they were taught by a close relation, and so did not pay for training (ie 34% by father, 20% by older brother, 15% by maternal uncle) while four carvers reported that they were self-taught. Here, there is less difference between those who were apprentices in Cabo Delgado or in Tanzania.

Table 23: Learning to Carve			
<i>Where:</i>	Mueda (n=26)	Tanzania (n=17)	All (n=61)
Age started carving (<i>Median</i>)	17.5	23.0	17.5
Length of Apprenticeship (yrs) (<i>Median</i>)	1	2.5	2
Taught by Relative	81%	76%	82%

Source: Woodcarver Survey, July/August 2005.

If the apprentice is a relative of the 'master' (ie from the same *likola* or kinship group) he is not required to pay; if not, the apprentice must pay for his instruction (either a little at a time, or as a lump sum at the beginning or end of training)²⁶⁷. Once the apprentice starts work he shares the money from the carvings he produces with the 'master', until he leaves the village or group, or the master relinquishes his claim on the apprentice's labour. Across the thirteen carving groups or villages in the 2005 survey there were, in total, less than 10 apprentices (with none in the three Pemba cooperatives), all of whom were relatives. Many carvers expressed concern about the low numbers of

²⁶⁷ The length of the apprenticeship is not fixed at the start, but depends on the 'interest and skills' of the apprentice. Similarly the amount of money required (from non-relatives) will vary and is negotiated on an individual basis between Master and apprentice, although I found no evidence of formal contracts. BM (Idovo, Mueda District, 12th July 2010) explained that 'nowadays, the apprentice has to pay some money because the Master is transferring his skills and abilities to the apprentice who will make money in the future', illustrative of the opportunistic behaviour that is now increasingly pervading carving as part of broader struggles for economic survival.

apprentices. They were worried that few if any young people would wish to become carvers in the future, because it involves a substantial commitment of time with increasingly uncertain returns. The system of apprenticeship is likely to remain under pressure unless and until woodcarving begins to offer more than simply a means of survival.

'The youth do not see the benefit of carving', of 'sitting wasting time doing nothing'; 'Young people need to have a lot of money at once' so 'they prefer a job which gives them immediately a result (coins for immediate use)'

Various Group Discussions (July/August 2005)

Our activity is in standby, because our work is not worth now and many young people to whom we believed that they could be successors they no longer want to learn this art, because they see no benefits on that. Also the young people are continuously asking why we old people insist on carving without any benefit from this job.

Group Discussion, Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (16th July 2005)

An additional entry barrier to woodcarving arises from the strict conditions required for membership of an association or cooperative. There are three elements to this. Firstly, a potential new member is expected to contact the President (in some cases by letter) explaining why they want to join, Secondly, they are expected to serve a probationary period (variously put at between one month and six months), during which their behaviour will be 'observed' and 'evaluated'. If after this period they are judged (by all cooperative members) to be acceptable as a member, they are then expected to pay a joining fee; the reported size of this payment varied between \$10 and \$20 in the urban cooperatives, but may be as little as \$1 to \$2 for membership of rural carving groups. These strict conditions for entry have tended to reinforce and reify the composition of existing carving networks, while effectively excluding many potential new members. The embedded values of artisanal craftsmanship, combined with limited alternative economic opportunities have led to a perhaps misplaced 'ethic of advancement through skills, quality and education' (Meagher, 2010: 123). However, while the main problem facing the carvers continues to be

that of intense competition and lack of effective demand it remains unclear how an increase in members would improve their livelihood prospects.

7.4.3 Makonde carving groups as ‘networks of survival’

When examining the nature of informal economic networks, Meagher (2005: 224) directs us (as discussed in Chapter 3) away from ‘social capitalistic assumptions and cultural stereotypes’ towards focusing on the ‘legacies, linkages and localities’ of individual networks as contingent factors shaping their success (or failure)²⁶⁸. The Makonde woodcarving cooperatives and associations in Cabo Delgado, although having earlier artisanal origins, were shaped by their resistance to colonial social and economic policies (which included migration), and were supported and nurtured by the liberation movement. However, for networks like these, the basis of accumulation (rather than simply survival) relies on more than just socio-cultural solidarity. Indeed, the strength of the linkages underlying the Makonde carving networks has subsequently been tested by economic and social pressures, by political change and by perceived relative state neglect (or betrayal) of the ‘traditional’ Mozambican culture that Makonde sculptors and sculpture represent.

Thus, while the carver network(s) in Cabo Delgado have been built in a sense on ‘the nostalgic construction of place’ (Blokland and Savage, 2001: 224), this construction is itself potentially divisive, because the nostalgia it embodies is unlikely to be universally (and equally strongly) felt by all members and can become a frame ‘for reflecting on change and division’. Some of this same ‘nostalgia’ appears to pervade carver perceptions of past support from the state at both provincial and national levels. The statement below is illustrative of numerous complaints by carvers about the lack of support they received from the ‘government’, compared to that available in the past and in contrast to the perception (erroneous or otherwise) that other forms of Mozambican cultural

²⁶⁸ Here Meagher is drawing, as she acknowledges, on Grabher and Stark (1997).

expression (dance or music, for example) were viewed more favourably by provincial or central authorities.

My complaint is about the government who do not care about the carvers, we do not know why. But during the war many carvers worked a lot for the freedom in Mozambique when they were producing carvings and selling them in Mtwara – part of the results we were giving the Frelimo as help for the war. What the government care about is the cultural activity like music and dancing, but not carving. We are really forgotten by the government, if not it could give us some facilities like market place and others’.

FM, Group Discussion, Cooperative Karibu Wimbe, Pemba (13th August 2005)

Taken together the various barriers to entry that have emerged (based as has been seen on ethnicity, gender, apprenticeship or membership requirements) have had the effect of creating an exclusive network of Makonde carving groups in northern Mozambique exhibiting a high degree of cultural homogeneity (or the ‘social ties of a bounded community’). Woodcarving is embedded within a network of social relations reflected in these entry barriers and a continuing deference by individual carvers to authority and experience. The carving groups seem to consider themselves to be in some respects guardians of an authentic Makonde sculpting ‘tradition’ in Cabo Delgado and feel that they should be able to use their ‘collective agency’ (embodied in the self-managing cooperatives and associations) to impose a degree of control that eludes the Makonde carvers in Dar es Salaam. This control appears to be largely illusory, however. In practice they are unable to prevent the opportunistic entry of other less-skilled or less well-trained carvers into the market (as has been increasingly seen with the part-time carvers in Pemba, several of whom may be Makua), often producing poorer quality articles for tourists, but sold as genuine Makonde sculpture.

The carving cooperatives and associations can be viewed as straddling the ‘blurred boundaries’ between formal and informal sector organisations. As I have shown earlier (Chapter 6, Section 1.2) all have some form of legal registration, which may extend to licensing or the payment of taxes on turnover, but they keep only very incomplete records of sales or payments. The organisational structures

and decision-making processes they have adopted likewise suggest a degree of formality and control that may be absent. Community networks of support have generally been viewed as stronger in rural areas than in urban settings, but Beall (2004), notably, talks of widespread ‘resource pooling within communities’ in African towns and cities. Urban carving cooperatives have evolved as social structures partly as a result of the unintended consequences of individual actions, rather than any deliberate design. However they have subsequently allowed the development of ‘pseudo-kinship’ relationships and a degree of mutual interdependence. Based upon a degree of shared interest, these could conceivably lead to more sustained and organised forms of collective action, which are intended to generate improved returns for most²⁶⁹. Nevertheless, I would stress that it is important not to romanticise the social networks and reciprocal relationships that have emerged from this process (Beall, 2004). Although within each carving group there are arrangements in place for limited revenue-sharing between members, in the daily struggle for survival individual carvers will inevitably choose to pursue their own economic interests. For some, this may mean abandoning carving activity altogether. Economic stress has intensified processes of differentiation within the Makonde carving groups, undermining existing cooperative forms of governance. They have become very much ‘networks of survival’ (Meagher, 2010), rather than accumulation, with the unravelling ‘social ties’ symptomatic of greater ‘powerlessness, fragmentation and vulnerability’, and the prospects of many individual carvers looking highly uncertain.

²⁶⁹ See discussion in Campbell et al (2005) on producer organisations in woodcarving. I discuss the scope for this route to ‘upgrading’ in Section 5.2, below.

7.5 What future(s) for the carvers? Chain ‘governance’ and the scope for upgrading

7.5.1 The nature of governance in the Makonde woodcarving ‘chain’

The structure and characteristics of the woodcarving ‘chain’ in northern Mozambique were explored in some detail in the previous chapter, using data gathered from my quantitative survey and other fieldwork. There, the woodcarving ‘chain’, in spite of its relative simplicity, was seen as exhibiting many of the characteristics of other more complex Global Commodity Chains/Global Value Chains (GCC/GVC). In this section I aim to use the GCC/GVC framework to focus discussion around the issue of chain ‘governance’ (who or what ‘drives’ the Makonde woodcarving chain) and the scope there might (or might not) be for the carvers to ‘upgrade’ or to improve their future livelihood prospects. The latter appears to hinge heavily on firstly countering the tendency towards commodification (which seems to have been an inevitable by-product of the growth of the tourist market), and secondly on building stronger forms of ‘collective agency’ amongst the carvers.

I would note again at this stage (as Gilbert, 2008 has clearly pointed out) that any ‘chain’ represents but one possible way of locating and analysing a sequence of activities involved in the production of a good or service, and in this way is an artificial framing (or reification) of the links between individual points in the ‘chain’ (see extended discussion in Chapter 2). Indeed, using this perspective the Makonde woodcarvers of northern Mozambique might also be considered ‘actors’ in two further, overlapping ‘chains’, depending on the reference point of the analysis. They are, firstly, a Mozambican tourism ‘chain’, within which the carvers supply arts and crafts for international tourists visiting Cabo Delgado (see also the discussion in Chapter 6). Secondly, there is also a separate Makonde woodcarving ‘chain’ in Tanzania, centred on Dar es Salaam (and in particular the Mwenge Craft village), into which the Mozambican Makonde have been drawn by migration and broader cultural and stylistic links (summarised in Section 2,

above). Ultimately, each 'chain' can be considered to have its own unique vertical logic, within which (as Fine's 'systems of provision' approach reminds us) history, place and social relations of production (and consumption) clearly matter.

'Governance' has been approached in a number of ways in GCC/GVC analysis (see Bair, 2005 and the critical review presented in Chapter 2). Early emphasis was placed on key actors or agents (dominant firms or groups of firms) at various points in the chain, with the aim of identifying 'ideal-types', but later contributions (see Humphrey and Schmitz, 2001, for example) looked at possible 'non-market' forms of coordination, which might be influenced by 'external' parties, based on accepted codes of practice or collective rules (for instance, 'fair trade' or other certification schemes), or indeed from accepted 'quality' dimensions attached to the products themselves. This focus on the institutional framework, rather than markets, and a more recent concentration in the GCC/GVC literature (derived from industrial economics) on 'lead firm coordination' have unfortunately shifted the analytical emphasis away from 'global' systems of production and the international division of labour towards much more narrow concerns (Gibbon et al, 2008).

There is a need to recognise that commodity 'chains' do not remain static, but are dynamic and subject to change in terms of both structure and operation. Indeed, I would argue that the nature of governance in the Mozambican Makonde blackwood 'woodcarving' chain has evolved in line with the changing forms of patronage since the initial commercialisation of blackwood carving in the 1920s²⁷⁰; initially 'driven' by colonial administrators or missionaries, the 'chain' was later coordinated by FRELIMO to support the needs of the liberation movement and finally, since Independence, has been governed by traders and craft enterprises servicing international tourist and export markets²⁷¹. However,

²⁷⁰ Although Makonde woodcarvings had entered into merchant trading networks in Cabo Delgado much earlier than this (see Chapter 2).

²⁷¹ Many carvers talked enthusiastically about the Government's (ie FRELIMO's) previous paternalistic support for and promotion of Makonde woodcarving. BM (Group Discussion,

many transactions take place directly between woodcarver and tourist or between woodcarver and domestic buyer, suggesting that the 'chain' may lack a clear 'driver' and is certainly far from universally 'trader-driven' (Gibbon, 2001) or, indeed, 'entrepreneur-driven' (te Velde, 2005). That is, while they may enhance the coherence of the Makonde woodcarving 'chain', neither traders nor craft enterprises can effectively fully mediate access to the chain, nor determine how the chain is coordinated. Nevertheless, the growing role of craft enterprises in Pemba (Arte Makonde Ida and, more recently, Ujamaa, part of the Aga Khan Foundation's EDI) suggests that they may well take a more prominent role in chain governance in the future (De Vletter, 2008). 'Entrepreneur-governance' is a characteristic feature of many NTFP/'traditional' craft chains (see Marshall et al, 2005), where it follows from the nature of the product and established supply networks, in which the 'poor' tend to be located at the bottom of the chain; it is a 'captive value chain' form of governance (Gereffi et al, 2005), within which individual artisans or small suppliers rely on much larger buyers. While the latter may create new market opportunities (due to the access they have to wider, often international markets), support the coherence of value chains and encourage innovation and quality improvements, they also tend to maintain control of market access and what is sold, and where.

The preceding discussion suggests (in the language of GCC/GVC analysis) that the Makonde woodcarving chain is 'tri-polar' in terms of 'governance'— in which we can observe a combination of 'trader', 'entrepreneur' and 'tourist/buyer'-driven forms of 'governance'. However, as Raikes et al (2000) point out, rather than relying on particular typologies, a better way of approaching 'governance' is to identify the source(s) of power in a 'chain' and the degree of power or powerlessness of any participant. As outlined, the Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado, as a particular class of labour (individual self-employed artists/craftmen)

Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda, 16th July, 2005) told me that 'years ago the government had many incentives in this art, found the clients for us, gave us sponsors and other ways to improve the woodcarvers life'. In practice, the 'nationalisation' of the woodcarving sector along the lines of that seen briefly in Tanzania in the 1970s/80s (see Molony, 2005) is no longer likely to be feasible, although greater involvement of Provincial authorities may be.

in a system of petty-commodity production rely upon other more powerful actors for access to markets and for the legitimisation of style and artistic form. The commodification of Makonde woodcarving has had a pervasive impact on production relations, including the organisation of apprenticeships, and has conditioned how the carvers have been incorporated into the local and global economy. In terms of 'chain' governance, this increasing commodification (exacerbated by the sale of poorer quality carvings by less-skilled non-Makonde artisans) has also reduced the scope for the forms of 'non-market' coordination identified above (that is, generally-agreed quality standards or certification, based on origin or provenance).

7.5.2 Market access

In summary, there are three broad 'markets' available for Makonde woodcarvings (as well as other arts and crafts produced by artisans). Firstly, a *local market* involving direct sales from producers to tourists visiting Cabo Delgado or to resident expatriates, orders from local businesses for functional or decorative items or occasional sales to provincial government officials. Secondly, there is a *regional or national market* involving sales via *traders* to other urban centres in Mozambique (for example, Nampula and Maputo). Finally, there are sales to local craft shops which are destined for *overseas markets*, which might include contracts with 'fair trade' organisations in North America or Europe²⁷². The carvers themselves, as far as I am aware, have no direct links with overseas markets and this is where 'global' implies nodes along the chain. As shown, while the Pemba-based carvers have traditionally been heavily reliant on tourists and local businesses for sales, the vast majority of sales by 'rural' carvers are via traders, with a sizeable proportion of the latter being based outside the province. In this section, I focus on the scope for an expansion in the size of the market, particularly higher *local* sales based on increased demand from tourists. Haggblade et al (2010: 1437) see tourism (along with agriculture and mining) as

²⁷² This taxonomy is based on de Vletter (2008), but modified by the author.

a 'key regional tradable' which can be the 'key to stimulating expansion in the rural non-farm economy', but certainly in the case of sales of arts and crafts the potential looks limited. The possibility for carvers to add value not by market expansion, but by 'upgrading' through quality improvements, certification or by better mobilising their 'collective agency' is an alternative approach that has been advocated and which I explore in detail in Section 5.3.

Woodcarvings and the markets in which they are sold have characteristics that set them apart from other art and craft products. Low value craft products (like woven mats, baskets or pottery) are sometimes viewed, certainly in local communities, as 'inferior' goods (see Chapter 3). That is, they are increasingly displaced by manufactured equivalents, including imported Chinese products, as household incomes rise (De Vletter, 2001; Arnold and Ruiz-Perez, 2001). Woodcarvings, on the other hand, are a higher value product, with a greater labour, creativity and skill input, relative to raw material costs. For the most part, carvings as 'art' (rather than functional craft item) are figurative or decorative and so expenditure on them is discretionary. As Jules-Rosette (1986: 47) points out, '(s)ince art is not an essential commodity, the (growth of the) market depends a great deal upon the stimulation of consumer interest and the expansion of the scope of the market'. 'Northern' tourists, in principle, offer an ideal route for expanding the market for woodcarvings given the potential demand for high quality 'souvenirs' and this is certainly a matter of concern to carvers, as the following comments attest. Despite the Mozambican government's policy rhetoric, which links poverty reduction to tourism promotion in Cabo Delgado (see Chapter 5), the carvers appear to believe that the government has done little to encourage tourism and indeed has placed unnecessary obstacles in the way of greater tourist sales:

'The main way which we are facing is the total absence of buyers. So we ask the government whether it can encourage the tourists to visit us more and more times.'

JRS, Group Discussion, Former 1st May Cooperative, Mize (28th July 2005)

'The problem here is the absence of customers or clients for our business, but I hope if the government provide more and more good tourism facilities which will invite many people from everywhere we'll get more clients, mostly from the foreigner countries.

'I agree with these ideas, and I remark that the government must review the taxes of carvings. Sometimes we see people who buy the carvings and not be allowed to take them to their countries, they are obliged to leave at the airport. So the tourists coming here cannot take any thing as souvenir for friends, family, etc.

NF and BS, Group Discussion, Cooperativa Mpingo, Pemba (27th July 2005)²⁷³

As was apparent from data provided in Chapter 6, there are clearly problems with an excessive reliance on a highly seasonal and uncertain end-market like tourism. Indeed, one of the aims of the AKF/EDI has been to develop a broader range of markets for arts and crafts from Cabo Delgado to include increased trade with retailers in Maputo and overseas²⁷⁴. Tourism can also promote unwanted stylistic changes. Indeed, the research presented in the last chapter shows that the tourist market has not only led to greater commercialisation, but and has also tended to encourage greater standardisation of themes and styles, as well as more emphasis on smaller, more portable items. Nevertheless, the general quality of Makonde carving remains high (and hard-crafted, rather than mass-produced) and is reportedly better than that produced by the Mwenge Craft Market carvers (Jenkins et al, 2002).

The AKF/EDI initiative requires that the various craft associations have access to a mobile phone in order to be contactable by UACAD to both provide feedback on quality and to inform producers of orders, thus reducing the barriers arising from market imperfection (Singh, 2009). However, from the perspective of the woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado, while the impact of ICT has so far been extremely

²⁷³ In fact, BS was referring to the requirement for an export receipt/export certificate from a registered seller demonstrating permission to remove a carving from the country, which is a bureaucratic process, rather than a tax *per se*.

²⁷⁴ Interview with Emile Badran at AKF, Pemba (24th May, 2010). He told me that he is 'sometimes concerned with the overemphasis on tourists', and that tourists would never be able generate enough business on their own. He estimated that in (April 2010) its first month of trading, 40% of sales of arts and crafts from the Ujamaa shop in Pemba were to tourists, with the remainder (60%) going to traders representing outlets elsewhere in Mozambique.

limited, it appears likely to have a highly uneven impact on livelihoods, and could potentially be damaging because it will accelerate processes of commodification, as power shifts further to retailers and foreign buyers. Most rural carvers are too poor to afford handsets or mobile phone credit and anyway live in villages without electricity or mobile signal access. The evidence from the African blackwood carving 'chain' in Tanzania is perhaps instructive (Molony, 2005)²⁷⁵. There, the 'heart' of the 'chain' is the extensive Mwenge Crafts Village in Dar es Salaam with its complex of retail outlets and associated Makonde woodcarving groups which supply it (see discussion in Chapter 6). The retailers based at Mwenge essentially 'drive' the woodcarving chain in Tanzania; they increasingly use ICT (mobile phones and Internet access) to cultivate and maintain international market links and communicate buyer requirements, via collectors, to rural carvers. The availability of ICT may have reduced the barriers to entry to international markets for smaller retailers and therefore expanded the potential market. However, a negative side effect is that for many of the Mtwara carving groups it will have stifled creativity as 'their work is becoming more commercialised as they are increasingly being told what to carve by collectors who supply Dar es Salaam retailers...who now have a better knowledge of demand because of their access in the city to ICT' (Molony, 2005: 199).

The Mozambican government has placed strategic emphasis on the expansion of tourism as an important element in its approach to poverty reduction and development, particularly in the north of Mozambique. From a macroeconomic point of view, this form of tourism is unlikely to generate significant net foreign exchange since many inputs used at the resorts are imported (see Chapter 4). For the local economy too, this form of tourism development in Cabo Delgado (and the particular type of tourist visitors) has meant that its immediate impact has been limited, and certainly cannot be considered 'pro-poor' (see Chapter 4). Most of these tourists generally have little direct contact with carvers in Pemba,

²⁷⁵ Molony's fieldwork in 2003 was based on interviews with carvers and carving groups in and around Dar es Salaam, and in Mtwara district in the south-east of the country, with collectors and with Tanzanian-based retailers in the African blackwood (vinyago) trade (Molony, 2005: 191-243).

let alone those in rural areas, while average expenditure on arts and crafts and other ‘cultural’ items remains well below levels seen elsewhere in Eastern and Southern Africa. One or two carvers from Pemba have responded by temporarily migrating ‘offshore’ themselves to ‘follow the tourists’, but this option is available to very few²⁷⁶.

7.5.3 The scope for ‘upgrading’

In the GCC/GVC framework, ‘upgrading’ relates to the ability of economic agents (usually enterprises or firms, but also individuals) to increase the benefits or ‘value’ they derive from participating in a ‘chain’. In theory, upgrading opportunities can take a number of forms (Humphrey & Schmitz 2001), all of which are likely to offer possibilities of value ‘creation’ and/or value ‘capture’, but the empirical evidence in support of this is limited²⁷⁷. For primary products, including carvings and handicrafts, the main scope is likely to be in product (quality) and possibly process (organizational) improvements (Gibbon, 2001). However, this seems to understate the degree to which there needs to be a marketing ‘tool’ in order to make any new styles attractive and to offset the tendency to standardise. For Daviron & Ponte (2005), the focus of upgrading relates to the first of these – the ability of producers to *create* and *control* the value embedded in the various quality attributes that form part of the product. Those individual carvers in Cabo Delgado who have been successful in doing this have adopted one of two strategies which have served to differentiate their work from others. Firstly, as in the work of Matias Ntundu of Nandimba village, by diversifying into a new genre or outlet for carving – woodcuts – which also provides the means for depicting new ‘artistic’ themes (like fables, rituals or village scenes) and multiple (but signed and numbered) reproductions of the

²⁷⁶ Discussions at Bela Baia Cooperative and Karibu Wimbe Cooperative, Pemba, 15th & 17th May 2010, respectively.

²⁷⁷ In addition, as discussed in Section 3 above, there are likely to be particular issues related to ‘cultural products’ like Makonde woodcarvings where individual skills and creativity are important and where identification of ‘value’ is problematic.

same image (Kacimi and Sulger, 2004)²⁷⁸. The second approach is to deliberately produce carvings which are unique and distinctive in terms of style, creativity and scale and which display high levels of individual artistry, as in the work of Labus Kulukambee and Felix Jaime of Mpeme village. Due to their size (1.5 to 2 metres in height) and the time taken to produce them (8 months or more), these pieces are typically made to order for provincial or national government officials, or for local expatriates, rather than for tourists²⁷⁹. Both of these approaches – the woodprints produced by Ntundu and the massive pieces fashioned by the Mpeme carvers – represent forms of ‘upgrading’ or value ‘capture’ which (at least temporarily) overcome the problem of commodification inherent in the tourist market. They are not, however, widely reproducible by other carvers, either because they rely upon outside intervention and support to supply the ‘means of production/reproduction’ (in the case on Ntundu) or because they depend upon a very high level of skills and creativity which most carvers lack (something that increasingly truncated apprenticeships are destined to make worse). In both cases, there remains the problem of accessing outlets and customers for this work.

An alternative route to ‘upgrading’ (ie raising the status of and potential returns to) carving activities has been offered by the development of a broader NGO-led initiative encompassing a range of ‘groups engaged in cultural production’ in Cabo Delgado (de Vletter, 2008), which includes the three Pemba carving cooperatives. The Aga Khan’s Entrepreneurial Development Initiative (EDI) (see Chapter 6, for more details), introduced in 2007, has as one of its aims the promotion of Association formation among craft producers in the Province. In May 2010 there were 33 registered craft associations²⁸⁰, which constituted the

²⁷⁸ There are clearly profound issues of ‘authenticity’ here – or hybridity – and sustainability, given that rollers, inks and paper are unavailable locally, meaning that while ‘supply difficulties persist, clients bring all the material to Nandimba’ (Kacimi & Sulger, 2004: 109). See also interviews conducted with Matias Ntundu in May and July 2005 and May 2010 (Various Field Notes).

²⁷⁹ One 1.6 metre hollow composite *shetani/ujamaa* for instance made to order for a client in Nampula took 7-8 months to produce and sold for MZM47,000 (about US\$1,350) (Field Notes, 20th May 2010).

²⁸⁰ Interview with Emile Badran, AKF (24th May 2010).

Union of Craft Associations in Cabo Delgado (UACAD)²⁸¹. The other stated aim of the EDI is ‘capacity building for commercialisation’, which looks at innovation and new initiatives, as well as market needs and value generation (or ‘valorisation’). Instead of ‘certification’, the EDI has supported the development of a ‘brand’ – Ujamaa (launched in 2008) – under which the carvings (and other arts and crafts) will be marketed. A UACAD shop outside Pemba airport (trading under the name Ujamaa) was opened in April 2010 selling craft products directly to passing tourists as well providing a ‘shop window’ for traders from Maputo and overseas (including Fair Trade organisations, which are expected to become increasingly important); this ‘physical’ outlet was seen as a useful guarantee of quality, reliability and ‘fair’ prices. As discussed, each craft group or association in UACAD must agree to be contactable by mobile phone on a weekly basis in order for information (on orders or sales returns) to be communicated. While a useful discipline for established producers, it may well present an additional barrier to entry to new craft groups.

Commodification (and associated standardisation) clearly limits the scope for ‘upgrading’ by producers. With regard to the woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado, Daviron and Ponte’s (2005) analysis suggests a possible approach based around the certification of the geographical origin (‘territoriality’) or ‘cultural’ provenance of carvings (‘authenticity’)²⁸². The aim would be to permit the embedding of ‘symbolic quality attributes’ – based on the particular history and reputation of the Makonde woodcarvers - and in this way to enhance or supplement existing tourist and other market opportunities. Instead of relying solely on market

²⁸¹ There are five formal roles at UACAD, two of which are salaried positions (Agostinho, a carver and the erstwhile Secretary of the nearby Bela Baia Cooperative is the President). Part of the role of UACAD is to ensure a constant flow of arts/crafts of appropriate quality (and stock control); it also has responsibility for basic ‘marketing’ of Ujamaa products. UACAD takes a 10% commission on each sale from the shop; it adds a mark-up of 60% on sculptures/wooden carvings and 80% for other crafts, which tend to have standardised shapes and designs (interview with Emile Badran, 24th May 2010).

²⁸² In addition, for woodcarving more generally there is scope for eco-labelling and certification based on the environmental sustainability of raw material sources. Schmitt and Maingi (2005) review the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) pilot scheme developed with Kenyan woodcarving cooperatives around Malindi, but are sceptical about the likelihood of success of a third-party certification scheme which is costly and has uncertain returns (see Section 3).

transactions (and market prices) to guide consumer knowledge of 'quality', the transmission of this knowledge could, for instance, be based on 'civic' norms or conventions (involving ideas of 'fair trade'). These approaches are designed *inter alia* to improve information flows along the value chain and to help reveal the identity of actors involved in production, trade and exchange. The greater transparency this is intended to engender – in terms of revealing the social relations under which the carvings are produced as well as environment-livelihood relations (allowing the consumption of 'place') – is seen by advocates as a way of countering 'commodity fetishism'. However, there is also an extensive and growing critique of fair trade and other market-based forms of shared solidarity embodied in these 'civic norms' (Raynolds, 2002; Bacon, 2005; Dolan, 2010). These critiques focus on how fair trade initiatives help 'embolden neo-liberal rationalities' as a 'process of mainstreaming installs new metrics of governance (standards, certification, participation) that are at once moral and technocratic, voluntary and coercive, and inclusionary and marginalising' (Dolan, 2010: 34).

While some form of 'certification' as an approach seems intuitively appealing, there are a great many practical constraints to be addressed. Firstly, the identification of 'quality' attributes and who decides what these are is problematic and is certain to both empower and disempower, to include and exclude, both individuals and producer groups. This is particularly the case with a cultural product like a Makonde carving where the issue of 'authenticity' is likely to be highly contested (see Chapter 2). Secondly, while the costs of participation in any certification scheme for producers are likely to be relatively large²⁸³, the benefits are very often uneven and uncertain, partly because it is impossible to prevent other producers from 'joining' and partly because the distribution of any gains in 'value' are likely to be appropriated by more powerful chain actors. More fundamentally, unless issues of context, power and authority are directly

²⁸³ Campbell et al (2005: 267) conclude that 'the costs of certification are prohibitive for carvers', while the monetary benefits of price premiums are highly variable and likely to reduce over time as the quantity of certified products rises (Bass et al, 2001).

addressed the ‘unmasking’ of social relations of (commodity) production alone will not eliminate exploitation. Finally, it is not immediately clear how a certification system might be initiated. Unless a strong producer association is in existence, the initiative has generally originated with consumer groups or NGOs (including fair trade organisations) of some form.

Indeed several writers (see Mitchell et al, 2009 for example) see greater scope for upgrading (for small, poor country producers) in improving ‘intra-nodal organisation’ or ‘horizontal’ upgrading at the production ‘node’. This is expected to come from some form of collective agency, like a producer group, or clusters of producer cooperatives, which it is argued would enhance bargaining power and support a ‘scaling-up’ of production. Belcher and Achdiawan (2005: 189-191) believe that well-functioning and effective producers’ organisations have contributed to the success of the woodcarving industry in several countries²⁸⁴. This is partly because these organisations had managed to obtain government support, but even in relatively poorly developed markets coordinated producer action reportedly led to higher floor prices and significantly higher returns. Nevertheless, although formal or informal producer associations may be manifestations of strong social networks, these may simply represent an attempt (as Meagher, 2010 points out) at ‘mutual assistance for economic survival’, rather than the basis for accumulation.

In Section 4, I described how most Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado are members (or seem to aspire to be so) of producer cooperatives or associations of varying degrees of ‘formality’ in terms of registration or the requirement for financial contribution or the sharing of revenue from carving sales. The barriers to entry derived from apprenticeships (and skills transmission more generally) and control over membership of carving associations/cooperatives which may be

²⁸⁴ Seven out of eight examples covered in their study have woodcarving producers’ organisations; those places in which woodcarving is a major contributor to household incomes (Bali, Sukabumi, Mexico, Kenya and South Africa) have effective producers’ organisations, although the direction of causation is not proven.

partly kinship-based, although imperfect, tend to reinforce the exclusivity of these groups and should in theory help support a strategy of 'horizontal' upgrading. However, as my research has revealed (see Section 1, this Chapter), several of the carver cooperatives/associations in my empirical survey have either 'failed' or are under threat because of internal division or organisational 'capture' by dominant individuals²⁸⁵, or due to the tendency not to pool benefits or revenues in any significant way. In order to overcome this and to foster the democratic management needed, even in small cooperatives or associations, support from district or provincial government may be required. This was a hope commonly expressed by the carvers, who believe that support should encompass help with financing, with tools, with the marketing and distribution of carvings and with helping to build active producer associations. The following comments by BM are illustrative of these sentiments:

We need a help from the local government to give incentives to us to continue our work because when we have the hand in tools or funds we will do all necessary effort to work and promote the Makonde culture for future generations. The years ago the government had many incentives in this art, found the clients for us, gave us sponsor(s) and other ways to improve the woodcarvers life'.

BM, Group Discussion, Cooperative Chibiliti, Mueda (16th July 2005)

This sort of help is unlikely to be forthcoming, however. While the Provincial Department of Education and Culture (DPEC) in Cabo Delgado supports the legalisation and registration of carver Associations and Cooperatives, it leaves the active promotion of Makonde woodcarving to NGOs and (licenced) private-sector craft outlets²⁸⁶. However, the market for carvings in Cabo Delgado in the foreseeable future is likely to remain thin and uncertain. Ultimately, if woodcarving is to have any chance of helping to reduce poverty – in a non-

²⁸⁵ See, for instance, comments by DM of Idovo village (Group Discussion, Mueda District, 12th July, 2005) who told me that 'previously we were organised in a cooperative and were working together, but after some years it seemed that the cooperative *was becoming a property of someone else*. Due to that, many of us decided to be apart because they were not satisfied with the cooperative'. Several other similar observations in 2005 (by carvers at Bela Baia, Pemba, 9th July 2005, for example) presaged the fragmentation or break-up of carving groups by the time of my return visit in May 2010.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Mr Marcelino Ndingano, Director of DPEC (Pemba, 11th May 2010).

transitory way – aside from abandonment altogether for another activity this, it appears, will have to be through access to new markets or by increased control over returns, through ‘upgrading’, possibly requiring new forms of collective action. As O’Laughlin (2002: 14) convincingly argues, ‘(u)ntil there are forms of collective agency that once more cross the rural/urban divide and address issues of class, poverty will endure in Mozambique, no matter how creatively individuals piece together multiple livelihoods’.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Setting and context: what I have done and why

In this thesis I have explored the nature of contemporary carver lives and livelihoods in Cabo Delgado, a province widely considered to be the most important in Mozambique in terms of handicraft skills and the range of available local arts and crafts²⁸⁷. As the location for my empirical study, it has therefore provided, I would argue, a richness in cultural ‘tradition’ difficult to find (and impossible to replicate) elsewhere in the country or indeed in much of Eastern and Southern Africa. I have detailed how (and why) Makonde woodcarving has come to occupy a unique position in Mozambique’s cultural heritage, but one which in many ways (both artistically and economically) appears increasingly under threat. I believe that the uniqueness in terms of location or ‘place’ of the current study should be considered a source of strength for this research. Tracing the long history of carving in the province allows the examination of its provenance and evolution within Makonde society, its commercialisation following incorporation into a ‘global’ woodcarving chain and, finally, how the carvers (individually and collectively) have grappled with poverty in the context of broader economic, social and political (and, increasingly, environmental) change.

My emphasis in this study has therefore been on developing an historical approach to the analysis of contemporary carver livelihoods, which has been a growing concern in livelihoods research (Francis, 2000; Murray, 2002; Scoones, 2009), as have been worries over the broader neglect of political economy, in both theory and policy. An excessive preoccupation with the present (as in SLA) has tended to distract attention from the longer-term sweep of history and changes in livelihoods over time. In reality, the origins of contemporary livelihoods lie firmly in the past. Art and craft production in Cabo Delgado has deep historical roots in the pre-colonial economy, where it developed to serve

²⁸⁷ As well as the Makonde woodcarvers, there are the silversmiths of Ibo Island, basketmakers from Mecufi and the unique woven grass mats produced in Palma (De Vletter, 2008).

functional, decorative or ritual needs in the local community or for regional trade, but was transformed (or 'hybridised') following colonial contact and expansion. Most handicraft production in the province has remained fairly narrowly focused geographically, however; the spread of Makonde woodcarving (from its original base on the Mueda plateau) in this sense, at least, has been unusual. My contention is that this follows from its relatively earlier commercialisation (in the 1920s), from the 'push' of oppressive colonial policies in Mozambique and 'pull' of economic opportunity in Tanganyika (in the 1940s and 1950s) and from the disruptive effects of armed conflict (from the 1960s) centred on the carvers' original 'homeland'. These pressures prompted a mass exodus of young men (carvers or potential carvers) to Tanzania or south to Maputo, followed by the return migration of many. Often this was to Pemba, rather than back to Mueda. There are the beginnings of a new wave of migration from Pemba to the offshore islands of Cabo Delgado with carvers in search of the elusive (and often illusive) tourist 'market'. Here, in this sweep of historical change, the 'lived' dynamics of class struggle – embodied in the resistance of carvers to forced labour, their subsequent migration and the commodification of carving which has undermined the capacity of carving households to meet their reproduction needs – have represented particularly important areas in my study. In terms of methodology, these dynamic features of carver livelihoods were captured partly by the longitudinal nature of my research (extending over a five-year period) and partly through the use of biographical interviews to record carver life stories.

Although the handicrafts sector in Cabo Delgado remains relatively small both in terms of market participants and the returns it generates for producers, it is a significant source of income for many poor and marginal households. However, because almost invariably it is a 'part-time', irregular occupation for rural dwellers it has been difficult to accurately assess how many individuals (and households) actively participate in commercial arts and crafts activities. The initial starting point of my empirical research (in 2005) was therefore a census of carvers in a number of important carving centres in Cabo Delgado, an exercise that itself

produced some important new data. It also starkly illustrated the ways in which households and livelihoods have increasingly become ‘stretched’ spatially, between rural and urban areas and across borders. The census of Makonde woodcarvers, which I believe to be the most comprehensive of its kind in Cabo Delgado, goes some way towards quantifying the scale of carving activity in the province. I identified almost 200 individual sculptors in total in Pemba and surrounding districts, in Mueda town and in a number of nearby villages (Idovo, Mpeme, Miula and Nandimba) known to be centres of carving activity. My survey of a sub-set of 61 carvers revealed information on a further 293 household members (indicating a mean household size of almost six); this suggests over 1,000 individuals living in households where carving offers at least a subsidiary income in the areas of Cabo Delgado surveyed. It seems highly plausible, if one includes other known Makonde carvers in Pemba, plus those likely to be active in smaller urban centres (Montepuez, Mocimboa de Praia and Palma, in particular) and in other villages in Mueda, Muidumbe and Nangade districts, that total carver numbers are at least 500-1000 in Cabo Delgado, contributing to households containing 3,000-6,000 individuals²⁸⁸, a small but significant ‘community’.

Having briefly summarised and reflected on the contextual ‘backdrop’ of the current study – in terms of setting, history and significance – I intend in the following sections to review in turn the research questions posed in Chapter 1. I then conclude with a discussion of the implications of my study for both development theory and practice, and for further research in the field.

²⁸⁸ Many of these may be only intermittently carving or actively selling work. This estimate is of course based on a number of assumptions, but it gives an idea of the order of magnitude involved. To put these numbers in perspective, over 1,000 Makonde carvers are employed at the Mwenge Craft Village in Dar es Salaam alone.

8.2 Structural characteristics of carver households: uniqueness, commonality, stratification

The unique characteristics of the woodcarvers who form the focus of my study are that they are from the Makonde ethnic group (apart from one notable exception) and that they are male. The vast majority were born in Mueda district. As I have demonstrated, there are strong cultural and historical reasons for this homogeneity in the carving community – often articulated very clearly by the carvers themselves – and as yet there is little sign of change in this respect. Although my respondents all stressed that there are few barriers to becoming a carver apart from basic ability, interest and a willingness to learn, in reality there are fairly elaborate means in place (in terms of kinship, cost of training and membership requirements) to restrict entry and to maintain the cultural and social exclusivity of carver ‘networks’. I pursue this issue further below (in Sections 3 and 5).

In most other respects, my empirical research indicated that the woodcarvers (defined as individuals who rely wholly or partly on woodcarving as an income-earning or survival strategy) are not on average systematically different from their neighbours in terms of key demographic or social characteristics. This is a useful finding in itself and offered a good basis against which to judge relative levels of poverty and well-being of carver households vis à vis the general population. When adjusting for the differences in household definition between my survey and that used by INE (IAF, 2002/2003 and IFTRAB, 2004/2005), the size and composition of households seems generally comparable; this is also the case in terms of mean age of household heads. The latter finding is perhaps surprising given the lengthy skills training needed to become a Master woodcarver, which most of my respondents identified themselves as being. The age distribution of carver households is rather different, however, with relatively larger numbers of both younger (mainly urban-based) and older household heads (predominantly rural-based) than in the general Cabo Delgado population. This same urban-rural

distinction can be identified when looking at the educational attainment of woodcarvers. While the Pemba-based carvers demonstrate the same levels of educational attainment as urban dwellers more generally, the rural carvers were half as likely to have attended school as their provincial neighbours. While availability of infrastructure was crucial, the disruptive effects of migration, war and displacement on schooling opportunities were also likely to be contributory factors here. Amongst the carvers, I found a significant link between educational attainment (in terms of years and level of schooling) and poverty (measured by asset ownership), mirroring findings identified in previous research (Sender et al, 2006; Howe and McKay, 2007).

Although my survey included questions on land holdings, agricultural output, ownership of livestock and alternative sources of income from household members, it did not attempt the systematic measurement of household expenditure or consumption (the basis of money-metric poverty measures) which lies at the centre of the three Mozambican national household surveys conducted by INE over the last fifteen years (IAF96, IAF02 and IOF08). The methodology used in these surveys and the conclusions that have been drawn in terms of poverty analysis are now generally considered to have been flawed. My preferred approach (and here I was guided partly by the SLF) was to focus on household features (or 'assets'), now considered a more reliable proxy for comparing levels of household wealth or poverty (even to some degree by INE itself). On this basis, carving households (in 2005) were on average marginally 'less poor' in most respects than their provincial neighbours.

A focus on the socio-economic characteristics of the carving 'community' itself, however, reveals not a homogenous group of individual artisans, but a highly stratified set of households. My survey appeared to indicate wide variations in earnings from carving both between individuals and between rural and urban dwellers (with the latter generating average returns over one-third higher), with many rural carvers failing to record any sales over the year. However, as a guide

to carver incomes these data on their own were not considered sufficiently broadly-based (only half of respondents volunteered data) or robust to be a firm basis for inter-household comparison. The use of self-reported income data which is time-specific, and prone to errors of definition and recall, is in general problematic. Again, a firmer basis for analysis comes from a comparison of the assets (or 'asset portfolios') held by carver households. On the basis of two 'asset indices' – one centred on living conditions and the other on possessions, I was able to identify both relatively high levels of poverty within the carving community, but also again marked differences between rural and urban households (with the living conditions and possessions scores of the latter almost double the former). More significant, however, was the high degree of stratification (or 'class polarisation') *within* rural and urban carving communities, particularly in the latter. Some carving groups (cooperatives or associations), judged on the basis of their average 'asset scores' have been markedly more successful than others. These tended to be those groups that exhibited greater stability in terms of membership and stronger leadership (see discussion in Section 3, below). Finally, at an individual household level, high 'asset scores' appeared to be most closely correlated with the educational achievement of the household head and with the availability of alternative income sources amongst household members. Opportunities for diversification, in the latter sense, were more readily available to urban dwellers.

There is, of course, a danger in relying too heavily on asset indices as a means of describing poverty or analysing levels of inequality. As O'Laughlin (2010) astutely warns, these indices make it 'impossible to trace shifts in class structure' and, because (as she believes, as I do) they tend to exaggerate the relative wealth of urban households, they serve to disguise 'evolving class differences under the mantle of the rural/urban gap' (28). On the other hand, my data also revealed high levels of heterogeneity within rural and urban communities. Although asset indices offer a useful antidote to income/expenditure based measures of poverty, I have also been conscious in this study of their essentially

individualistic and static nature. They are likely to be poor at capturing the dynamic and relational aspects of livelihoods that would enable the examination of individual carver livelihood trajectories and the evolution of 'class' within the carving community. To do this I therefore complemented my household survey data with qualitative evidence drawn from the group discussions, conversations with key informants, life stories and direct observation.

8.3 Contemporary carver livelihood: pathways and trajectories

The focus of the prevailing paradigm of livelihoods theory (and policy) over the last 15 years has been on identifying the assets (or 'capitals') that individual households possess and control and how they might combine (and exchange) these in order to lift themselves out of poverty in a sustainable way. This approach posits that all households (even the 'poorest', however they are identified) have both the means and the agency to actively participate (or 'strategise') in the market and to do so advantageously. My research adds to that of a growing number of studies which have been critical of this particular framing of poor people's 'livelihoods'. The objections are both methodological – particularly the reductionism that underpins the SLA - and contextual, because of the common neglect of history and social relations in both the analysis of livelihoods and in the framing of policy interventions that follow from this.

It seems apparent from my study that while contemporary carver livelihoods have been shaped by the strong cultural 'traditions' of the Makonde, they are also a product of the particular mode of incorporation of the Makonde into the colonial economy and of their resistance to the exploitation that resulted from this, which often took the form of cross-border migration. The evidence from my household survey appears to show that the carvers were much more likely to have migrated to Tanzania than their provincial neighbours. Many learnt to carve there, under the guidance and tutelage of relatives. After their subsequent return to

Mozambique, they have been more likely to remain 'footloose', permanently shifting location or 'stretching' their livelihoods across rural and urban settings.

Evidence from the group discussions and life stories confirmed that migration often played a crucial, formative part in the livelihood trajectories of many carvers in terms of educational opportunities (or lack of them), access to skills training and exposure to the 'market', including new forms of patronage and the development of particular carving 'styles'. For several of the older carvers who participated in my research, early patronage by missionaries in and around Mueda was followed, after migration to Tanzania, by links with merchants or traders supplying the growing international market for carvings from the 1950s onwards (a form of patronage largely unavailable to those remaining in Mozambique). Later, FRELIMO's support for carving activities in Cabo Delgado during the Independence struggle (in the 1960s and 1970s) offered a new form of patronage, influencing both carving styles and mode of organisation of carving groups. Although kinship links played a part in facilitating access to diasporic communities and skills training, the overwhelming evidence from my reading of carver life histories is of contingent events driving livelihood 'trajectories', rather than these emerging as a result of rational strategic decisions. Migration to Tanzania might be seen as a form of resistance, but it may also (implicitly perhaps) be viewed as a 'disembedding strategy' (Meagher, 2010) or a way of extricating individuals from communal obligations, thus opening up opportunities for developing more informal 'networks' based on newly emerging social and economic ties.

My research revealed that while a small minority of carvers appears to have been successful in accessing market opportunities, most have not. For many in rural areas, carving might thus be viewed simply as a symptom of limited options and/or poverty, which will be abandoned as soon as more plausible alternatives arise. Although it is likely to remain at best a supplementary income source, it will also continue to perform an important 'safety net' role. For most urban sculptors,

woodcarving is the primary or only source of income, and many face an increasingly difficult struggle for survival, which (as in the case of Karibu Wimbe Cooperative, in Pemba) may result in the distress sale of carvings (or even tools), or even migration. I encountered some exceptions, of course, with the few outwardly more successful carvers (based on high 'asset rankings') having diversified their livelihoods through unique stylistic development (see Section 4, below) or through the pursuit of new sources of income.

Most of the Makonde carvers in Cabo Delgado are members of carving groups (cooperatives or associations) of varying size and degree of formality/informality in terms of organisation and structure, based on both social (kinship) and cultural ties. The exclusivity of the Makonde carving groups is maintained by a number of barriers to entry, both explicit and implicit. These relate, first and foremost, to opportunities for apprenticeships/skills training, which remain largely kinship-based, but also include rules on membership, joining fees and a required period of 'probation'. Although up-front costs are normally only paid for training if the apprentice is not a relative, in almost all cases the Master continues to receive a proportion of the revenue from sales of carvings produced by the apprentice while he is being trained. The increasing commercialisation of carving as livelihood activity has meant that the potential for a conflict of interest between Master and apprentice, and thus the scope for opportunistic behaviour (by either party), has grown. The observable outcome (confirmed by my research) has been a decline in the average length of apprenticeships. This appears to have been both a cause and a consequence of recent market developments and the commodification of carving styles (see discussion in 4, below).

Although the largely kinship-based apprenticeship system serves as a means of general cultural embedding, it also ensures the transmission of valuable skills for supporting individual livelihoods. Alongside this, within the colonial and post-colonial economy of Mozambique, as shown, class has increasingly intruded as a key factor controlling access to the necessary skills, resources and markets

underpinning contemporary carver livelihood opportunities. The economic 'status' of the carvers (in the rural non-farm economy and urban 'informal' economy) is certainly ambiguous; it has been linked to the emergence of carving as an occupation with deep cultural roots and the contemporary institutional networks (cooperatives or associations) within which the carvers operate.

Carver livelihood trajectories - including how successful individual carver households have been in terms of asset accumulation – appear on the surface to have been connected with the success or failure of the carving groups (or 'social networks') of which the carvers have been a part. To some extent this might be expected to follow from the partial sharing of revenue from the sale of carvings which, in the most common arrangement, involves individual carvers contributing 10% of the value of sales to the cooperative or association. However, at best this is likely to provide a limited 'safety net' for those group members who are unable to find buyers for their carvings, offering survival rather than the basis for accumulation.

A different interpretation (as in the SLA and neo-liberal development discourses which have lain behind many recent policy interventions) might link carving 'success' to the presence within these cooperatives or associations of high levels of 'good' social capital – where the trust and solidarity engendered by these groups or networks has been a source of 'economic empowerment' for members. However, both the diversity of experience (in terms of asset accumulation) of individuals within these groups and the varying success of the different carving networks I encountered suggest that the relatively narrow perspective offered by such 'social capitalistic' approaches is problematic. The recent fracture and implosion of some of the carving groups suggests that they do not necessarily always and everywhere offer a superior form of organisation or governance of 'informal' activity or a source of 'good' social capital. My closer examination (or more 'fine grained analysis') of these carver social networks (and individual carver 'trajectories') suggests that while they may have had shared histories or

‘legacies’ in terms of their artisanal origins and organisational logic (based around colonial resistance), they have been differently shaped by subsequent (post-Independence) economic and political changes.

A key element in the emerging institutional terrain has been the changing role of the Mozambican government. In a narrow sense, this has been manifested in (what the carvers widely believe to be) ‘state neglect’ or the removal of state support for ‘traditional’ culture, like woodcarving (which we might view as part of an ‘organised forgetting’ by FRELIMO of its more radical past). More pervasive and damaging, however, has been active state encouragement of a development model fostering private sector involvement in strategic sectors of the economy, leading to patterns of growth which have been far from pro-poor’, but on the contrary have led to exclusion and increasing levels of inequality.

My final observation in this section relates to the curious and worrying neglect of the issue of ‘sustainability’ in SLA, not only in an economic sense through ensuring that particular livelihoods can support long-term household reproduction, but also environmentally, with the latter a particular concern for natural resource based activities, like carving. The majority of Makonde sculptors in Cabo Delgado still work exclusively in African blackwood (or *mpingo*), which they consider to be ideal for intricate carving work, as well as embodying a special cultural significance (Kingdon, 2002). Most do not yet appear to be concerned about the availability of this wood, although there are exceptions, certainly amongst the Pemba-based carvers. For the urban carvers financial cost is the issue; for the rural carvers, it is the time and physical effort involved in acquiring wood that concerns them. However, many forest products (or raw materials), like *mpingo*, are available as common property resources to which there is effectively open-access. This is likely to give rise to increasing competition between carvers (particularly for mature trees), higher raw material costs (in terms of time and/or money) and ultimately an increasing shift into new varieties of wood if carving activities are to be sustained (and sustainable).

Of far greater concern as agents of indiscriminate over-exploitation, however, have been the largely foreign-owned timber companies (several from China) attracted to Cabo Delgado by its abundant and varied forest resources, to which the Mozambican government has given easy access. There has been growing evidence over the last few years of unsustainable harvesting practices and blatant attempts at the circumvention of legal controls on the unprocessed export of high-value, 'precious' wood varieties from Pemba. These problems have generally been blamed on corrupt or ineffective local officials. However, here can be seen the interface between the Mozambican government's 'extractive' model of development – within which foreign investors and the private sector have been given preferential access to the country's natural resources – and the carving community (and the poor of northern Mozambique more generally) in its starkest perspective.

8.4 The market for woodcarvings: cultural product and commodity

Since its emergence on the Mueda plateau in the 1920s, the 'modern' Makonde blackwood woodcarving movement has undergone a number of stylistic and economic transformations, often in parallel. The older woodcarvers recounted how from its earliest phase – the sale of items commissioned by missionaries and colonial officials – to the contemporary market in which tourists have a key influence, 'outsiders' have played a crucial role in the commercialisation of woodcarving in Cabo Delgado. However, the carvers now find themselves with neither the power nor agency to fully capture the 'value' inherent in their work. Instead they have faced increasing pressures for standardisation and commodification and concerns over the sustainability of their livelihoods. Although my analytical approach is different, the set of 'challenges' that I have identified in my research is very similar to those noted by Cunningham et al

(2005), based on their analysis of case studies of carving in Africa, Asia and Latin America²⁸⁹.

Commodity or value chain analysis (in the shape of GCC/GVC approaches) provided a useful conceptual or practical ‘tool’ in this study for framing the links between the carvers and global markets. What has become clear, however, is that the Makonde woodcarving ‘chain’ does not adhere to any of the ideal types or governance structures (or ‘chain’ drivers) proposed by GVC researchers. My analysis suggests that the (Mozambican) Makonde woodcarving chain is best seen as being ‘tri-polar’ in terms of governance – combining trader, entrepreneur/retailer and tourist/buyer forms of governance – suggesting both a number of points of tension and a potential lack of coherence in the ‘chain’. Finally, the over-emphasis in GVC approaches on the static, vertical logic of any chain leads, I would contend, to neglect of important ‘horizontal’ dimensions and of the dynamism inherent in any chain. These dimensions – place, social relations, culture, institutions, natural environment – make each ‘chain’ an evolving and unique ‘system of provision’ (sop); again (as with SLA) this cautions against simplistic policy prescriptions built on standardised typologies.

I was able to use data from my household survey, from group discussions and other fieldwork to establish the main stages/features of the Makonde woodcarving ‘chain’, to identify its unique (but evolving) ‘dynamics’ and, finally, to explore chain ‘governance’ and the role of different forms of patronage. My empirical research revealed a ‘market’ for Makonde woodcarvings in Cabo Delgado that is now highly fragmented. There are, in practical terms, three fairly distinct ‘markets’ for these carvings; a local market based on direct sales by producers to residents or visitors, largely tourists; a regional market, made up of sales via traders to larger urban markets in Mozambique; and, finally, an overseas market serviced by local craft outlets in Pemba, increasingly using ‘fair

²⁸⁹ The common challenges they identify are: limited market access; lack of product diversity or variation in carving styles; inadequate quality of many carvings, partly the result of poor tools; and, concerns about the sustainability of raw materials.

trade' organisations or other ethical trading routes to access new sales opportunities. For the urban carvers it is the tourist market that now increasingly dominates. The rural carvers (particularly those around Mueda), on the other hand, are as yet relatively inaccessible to tourists and so remain heavily reliant on a limited number of itinerant traders. Both urban and rural carvers (perhaps inevitably) complained of a 'lack of clients', erratic sales and uncertain returns to carving. While the carvers frequently talked (in the group discussions and informal conversations) of woodcarving in terms of a Makonde 'cultural legacy' they were also conscious that it inevitably (and inescapably) involved a compromise between artistic self-expression and the need to 'carve for the market'. This tension between carving as cultural product and as commodity emerged as an important theme in my research. Here the conceptualisation of Makonde woodcarving as a particular 'system of provision' – in which the economic and cultural are treated as intertwined and inseparable, rather than discrete elements, as in standard Global Value Chain analysis - was crucial to the analysis.

'Modern' Makonde carving built on a pre-existing sculptural 'tradition' (the production of ritual and functional items by non-specialist craftsmen, some of which entered long-distance trade), but became 'hybridised' in terms of form and style following initial commercialisation after colonial occupation of the Mueda plateau in the 1920s and 1930s. For some critical observers it is now dismissed as mass-produced 'tourist art', lacking 'authenticity' in a Western aesthetic sense. However, I would argue (after Jules-Rosette, 1986) that even contemporary 'tourist art' – defined as work produced wholly or partly for sale to tourists – can, as in the case of Makonde sculpture, provide a vehicle for asserting new cultural syntheses and meanings, and can therefore be considered authentic to both producers and buyers. Many of the carvers who participated in my research emphasised the uniqueness of Makonde culture. They retain the belief that their skill and ability in woodcarving represents an important form of cultural expression (or cultural 'capital'), shaped by their particular heritage and history.

The vexed question of the nature of 'authenticity' aside, Kingdon's seminal study (2002) of Makonde Master carvers in Dar es Salaam demonstrated very clearly that the blackwood sculptures they produced reflected originality and creativity, drawing syncretically on traditional symbolism, motifs and beliefs, as well as on Western requirements for figurative or decorative art. However, these individuals were probably already an anachronism fifteen years ago and are clearly now the exception in Dar es Salaam (particularly in Mwenge), where carvings are now increasingly mass-produced in workshops attached to retail outlets (West and Malugu, 2003; Molony, 2005). I have nevertheless argued in this thesis that at present the most sophisticated Makonde blackwood sculpture in Cabo Delgado can still be considered a cultural good or product or indeed (in narrow 'Western' terms) a work of art. In other words, these sculptures have the capacity to exhibit the key features of creativity or originality, symbolic meaning and expressive authenticity (Throsby, 2001) which separate them from artefact or commodity. There are at least two implications that follow from this; firstly, that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to determine the true 'worth' or value of the individual creativity (or I might argue labour time, or 'use value') these carvings embody in the marketplace, and, secondly, that it is similarly problematic to identify (and capture in market exchange, via market price) the high 'social use value' the Makonde community places on the traditions or systems of meaning that these blackwood sculptures symbolise.

Why does the disjuncture between price and value matter? The derivation of the price for an individual carving often occurs through active negotiation or transactional bargaining. Face to face, 'performative' bargaining (Steiner, 1994) should, in principle, allow producers to individualise the sculptures they sell – overcoming the anonymity of the producer, as well building in knowledge of symbolic meaning, expressive authenticity and provenance. In this way carvers might aim (unconsciously at least) to partially counter the 'commodity fetishism' that follows from market exchange. I have provided examples of different pricing practices adopted by rural and urban carvers in their face-to-face transactions in

Cabo Delgado and how these differ from the more 'sophisticated' pricing strategies adopted by retailers in Mwenge Craft Market in Dar es Salaam. It became apparent that the carvers in my study have limited individual agency; power and control (and ultimately price-setting) within the 'woodcarving chain' is very much in the hands of traders/retailers controlling both the distribution of value and the availability of information concerning conditions of carving production and carver reproduction. These traders or retailers use their 'market knowledge' of the tastes and 'willingness to pay' of clients and carver costs of production to their advantage.

Most carvers have felt that the main scope for market expansion (and greater livelihood security) lies with tourists and so have focused their efforts on the production of portable souvenirs in a limited number of styles. This emphasis may be misplaced, however. Issues of definition and measurement aside, there is limited evidence thus far of the 'pro-poor' impact of tourism in Cabo Delgado. Tourism has had little (observable) effect on the local economy, beyond the expansion of hotel facilities on the coast and offshore islands, and growing numbers of visitors using Pemba International airport. In international terms (and in spite of the government's strategic emphasis on the sector) overseas leisure tourist numbers remain small and little tourist expenditure yet appears to trickle down to the poor, even in Pemba. I encountered very few tourist visitors during my field research in Mueda and little discernible improvement in tourist facilities between 2005 and 2010.

Tourists as the main contemporary 'patrons' in Cabo Delgado – unreliable and capricious, but also conservative in their tastes and requirements – present a problem for the woodcarvers, which they themselves increasingly recognise. Improving carver livelihood 'prospects' in a sustainable manner relies on overcoming the 'commodity problem' (Daviron and Ponte, 2005); in other words by countering the tendency towards commodification that seems inevitable and inherent in the growth of the tourist market. Rather than expanding sales, an

alternative way of increasing returns from carving is by capturing more of the value from each transaction through (what is known in the language of GVC analysis as) 'upgrading'.

The scope for upgrading in primary or natural resource-based commodities is limited, but relies on the ability to create and control the value embedded in the quality attributes of the 'product'. For woodcarvings, this might come from new styles/genres, which are distinctive as unique 'cultural products', rich in creativity, expressive authenticity and symbolism. In this study I have provided examples of Makonde woodcarvers in Cabo Delgado who have followed this route (through producing sophisticated carvings on a massive scale or by developing new 'products', like woodprints), but these opportunities are not available to the majority due to lack of reputation, skills or financial capital.

A second way of 'upgrading' might be through some form of certification (possibly via ethical trading networks), which would recognise the regional and historical provenance of the Makonde carvings from Cabo Delgado (as well as being an attribution of quality); the naming of individual carvers would help overcome the anonymity intrinsic in woodcarving as commodity. While the increase in transparency might help to dislodge the mask of 'commodity fetishism', it will not on its own eliminate exploitation, but merely shifts the mode of governance to 'fair trade' or other certifying bodies which are now themselves seen as 'mainstream' (Dolan, 2010) and over which the carvers still have little control.

A final, perhaps more sustainable, path to 'upgrading' and one that follows more directly from the 'systems of provision' approach is through some form of 'horizontal' upgrading at the production 'node'. This would involve mobilising the 'collective agency' that currently lies dormant in the carver social networks (the cooperatives or associations) and directing this towards political action and institutional change, rather than simply economic survival. For woodcarving to help to support livelihoods and reduce poverty in a sustainable way requires

moving beyond individual action (and the revenue-maximising behaviour of self-employed artisans) and towards a reinvigoration of the collective 'project' that underpinned the establishment of the cooperatives during the Independence struggle. The alternative, for many carvers, is likely to be a continued struggle for survival.

8.5 Implications for theory, practice and further research

This study has used the conceptual apparatus and explanatory power of political economy to explore carver lives and livelihoods in Cabo Delgado, based around a 'micro-level' empirical investigation of Makonde carving communities in both urban and rural settings. It has been deliberately eclectic in approach, drawing on various disciplinary components of development studies, broadly defined (not only political economy, but also anthropology, economic geography and sociology), recent work in cultural economics and insights from the literature on art history and African arts and crafts. The unifying framework has been, firstly, the treatment of Makonde woodcarving in Cabo Delgado as part of a unique 'system of provision' (Fine, 2002), with its own 'vertical logic', but one in which 'horizontal' factors – including the specific influence of place or locality, social relations and contingency – play a crucial role. Secondly, the study also meshes with evolving work in social network analysis (Meagher, 2005; 2010), which uses an institutional approach to examine the factors influencing the success or failure of African artisanal associations and other groups.

On a conceptual level, this study argues (like some other recent reviews of the literature) that we have reached a critical impasse (or theoretical cul-de-sac) in the evolution of both the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (Scoones, 2009) and Global Value Chain analysis (Gibbons et al, 2008). My work adds to the growing body of research that also questions their uncritical adoption in both development discourse and in the design of policies aimed at improving the livelihoods of the poor. The SLA and GVC analysis both eschew theoretical rigour, instead offering

simplifying frameworks which downplay the importance of context and dynamic change in determining the appropriate form and focus of development policy interventions. Recent attempts to engineer a ‘scaling-up’ of livelihoods (by manipulating the terms on which the poor engage with the ‘market’, through initiatives like M4P) or by ‘upgrading’ in global value chains are likely to fail unless they involve rather more fundamental changes in the structure and relations of production and exchange than currently envisaged. It is increasingly clear that to be effective, development interventions need to be framed in a manner that is sensitive to the complexity of local economic, political, institutional and natural environments, rather than assuming that ‘best-practice’ is good practice in all circumstances.

The macroeconomic policy currently being pursued by the Mozambican government – combining donor-funded infrastructural investment with incentives for private sector involvement in strategic extractive sectors of the economy – does not appear (even on the evidence from national household surveys and GoM pronouncements in PARPA I and PARPA II) to have led to broadly-based poverty reduction or greater equality in Cabo Delgado. My research, which bridged the years 2005-2010, seems to confirm that this ‘donor-driven’ model has had little impact on the general well-being of the carvers (or their neighbours, I would posit). Some individuals have clearly benefited and outward signs of ‘development’ have gradually been appearing – bicycles, new village schools, new health centres, electricity supply infrastructure, new roads²⁹⁰ - but little in the way of new livelihood opportunities.

²⁹⁰ It was apparent that the main road from Macomia to Mueda (the only route available to Mueda from Pemba) had deteriorated between my first visit in 2005 and my last in 2010. An excerpt from my Field Notes from May 2010 is illustrative: *‘We leave Macomia on a beautiful tarmac surface – which wasn’t there five years before – but after five kilometres the tarmac suddenly ends and we move on to a rutted, dusty red dirt road. Five years ago this lasted for about 30 kilometres and then tarmac, albeit potted, reappeared. Now, the surface is far worse and much more unpredictable. A depressing thought that the road network is now much more degraded than it was in 2005 (not just here, but in Pemba too), parts of it washed away completely by the rains. Severo tells me that the government is planning to complete this part of the road in the next year or two, but we will have to wait and see’.*

I have noted how the particular constraints inherent in part-time doctoral research influenced my methodological approach and required flexibility and adaptation in my research plan. Employment demands (and resource constraints) meant that my primary research in Cabo Delgado was based around three intensive phases of fieldwork (each of three to four weeks duration) stretching over a five-year period (between 2005 and 2010), rather than a lengthy period of immersion (and ethnographic enquiry) in the locale. My longitudinal approach (admittedly stretching over a longer period than originally envisaged) permitted me to observe and map the evolution of carver lives and livelihoods. However, what I may have missed though using short duration visits was the opportunity to gain a more in-depth and intimate knowledge of the social networks within which the carvers work (including day-to-day interactions, power struggles, organisational tensions and dispute resolution). With hindsight, the use of case studies of two carving groups of comparable size, one urban (Bela Baia Cooperative in Pemba, perhaps) and one rural (Association Combatentes Aldeia in Nandimba), may have offered the possibility of a richer and thicker institutional analysis, even within the logistical constraints I faced. A further area, beyond the immediate scope of my study, which would warrant more research (along the lines of Steiner, 1994) would be to track the operation of the long-distance traders who act as intermediaries in the woodcarving 'chain' between rural carvers in Cabo Delgado and urban markets in Nampula, Beira and Maputo.

Although my 'mixed-methods' approach (blending quantitative and qualitative elements) permitted a number of points of methodological triangulation, I will address in finishing some possible (lingering) concerns with the validity, reliability or indeed generalisability of my research.

One issue might relate to the 'representativeness' of the group of carvers that were chosen for detailed investigation. To recap, I used a purposive sampling method to select 61 respondents for my household survey from an initial 'population' of almost 200; later, I recorded the life stories of a sub-group of 16.

The rationale behind this, set out in detail in Chapter 5, was that I wanted to identify key individuals in each carving 'group', those with experience, often holding key roles and with a 'story to tell'; I then used the group discussions, involving all available group members, to give a 'voice' to other carvers. An ex-post comparison with the general population (using data from national household surveys) indicated that the demographics of my sample matched those of their provincial neighbours fairly closely, but with a number of distinctive features.

A second broad area of concern relates to the relationship between researcher and respondents. The choice of locality and research focus was partly driven by my existing knowledge of northern Mozambique derived from a previous visit and from my involvement with a small charity supporting cultural activities in Cabo Delgado. I was already known to the carving groups in Pemba, prior to the commencement of doctoral research, as a representative of a 'donor' organisation which had previously supplied small amounts of support for tools and infrastructure. Although this relationship may have coloured the respondents' initial perception (in a generally positive sense) of my investigation, working through local, Makonde-speaking research assistants re-established the appropriate 'distance' and, I would argue, objectivity. A greater concern, perhaps, was the researcher's limited linguistic ability in Makonde and Portuguese. This meant that the transcripts of group discussions and the life stories were effectively filtered through two layers; recorded (via tape or digital recorder) in Makonde and then transcribed into English by the research assistants. Some cross-checking of the accuracy of the data was possible (the two research assistants working together on transcription of the group discussions and the life story recordings independently transcribed by a Makonde-speaker resident in the UK), but this did little to reduce the distance between researcher and respondents.

Let me deal, finally, with the issue of 'setting'. Previous work by Kingdon (2002) and Kacimi & Sulger (2004)²⁹¹, although not directly addressing the political economy of carver livelihoods, had celebrated the unusual richness and significance of the Makonde woodcarving heritage, and touched on their history of struggle, migration and resistance. The choice of the Makonde woodcarvers – as a unique group of artists/artisans operating in Cabo Delgado – was compelling. The particular ethnic/geographical setting might suggest some limitation in terms of perceived generalisability or replicability, although (as I discussed in Chapter 5) this issue appears to be more apparent than real. The insights offered by a narrowly-focused 'micro-level' study like mine (using a 'mixed-methods' approach) are particularly useful, I contend, for critically evaluating the validity of synthetic frameworks (like SLA and GVC analysis) which themselves make claims of 'universality' that are difficult to justify. Individual carver lives and livelihoods (like those of the members of the Bela Baia Cooperative with which we started this study) cannot be reduced to the stereotypical and nor should they be.

²⁹¹ While Kingdon's fieldwork was focused on Tanzania, he also dealt with the origin of Makonde settlement and the emergence of 'modern' blackwood' carving on the Mueda plateau in Cabo Delgado. Although Kacimi & Sulger's study post-dated the start of my research, a version of the manuscript had been made available to me in 2002.

Appendices



Figure A. 1: The Research 'Team' (Left to right, Daniel Mwanga, Vincent Rich, Estevao Richard Nkandjanga and Severo Rafael Mpachoca) after our arrival in Mueda, 10th July 2005. Daniel Mwanga (from Idovo), himself a Makonde Master carver at the Karibu Wimbe Cooperative in Pemba, sadly died in 2007.



Figure A. 2: Estevao conducting the first of three Household Survey interviews in Idovo Village, 11th July 2005. Severo, in parallel, was undertaking four more.



Figure A. 3: Carvers of the Association Shulumu in Mpeme village (about 5 kms east of Mueda) hard at work in the morning sun, with carvings on display in front of them, 18th July 2005. Felix Jaime Moamede (centre) is working on one of the large hollow ujamaa for which he is famous (see Figure A.8).



Figure A. 4: Group discussion at Sociedad Arte Makonde Bela Baia, Pemba (9th July 2005) held in the cooperative's neat showroom. Estevao is setting out some 'ground rules' (see my written description in Chapter 5, Section 4.2).



Figure A. 5: Following the Group Discussion, carvers of the Association Eduardo Mondlane in Miula village proudly display some of their work in front of the canopied carving area, adjacent to the Mueda to Negomano road (15th July 2005).



Figure A. 6: Makonde art as commodity! A vendor at the Saturday morning open-air craft market at Praca 25 de Junho in Maputo (5th April, 2008). The carvings are a mix of maasai and ujamaa (many of latter deliberately left rough and unfinished), produced from widely differing quality of mpingo or blackwood. One of the smaller hollow ujamaa formed the basis of my attempt to 'reverse the chain' (see Chapter 5, Section 4.3).



Figure A. 7: Severo eliciting a life history from a carver in Nandimba village, in the garden of his compound (23rd May 2010). These were recorded in Makonde using a Digital Voice Recorder and subsequently transcribed into English. A sub-set of the life history interviews were later independently transcribed and checked for accuracy by a UK-based chiMakonde speaker.

Figure A. 8: Felix Moamed with an example of a massive hollow ujamaa he had recently completed (21st May 2010). These are carved to order and may take eight months or more to produce. While this could be taken as an example of 'upgrading' or as a means of overcoming the 'commodity problem' assailing most carvers, there is no guarantee that the 'buyer' who pays nothing up front will return to collect the piece.



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